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Wishes pour in as Modi becomes India's longest-serving elected PM

Leaders across parties hailed Modi's milestone and years of governance

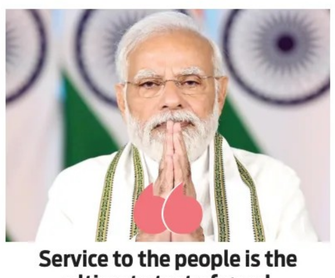
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday became India's longest-serving elected Prime Minister, completing 4,399 consecutive days in office and surpassing the record held by India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. The milestone triggered congratulatory messages from constitutional authorities, Union ministers, NDA allies and political leaders across the country.

Marking the occasion, Modi reiterated that public service remains the true benchmark of good governance. Sharing a Sanskrit verse on social media, he said only those who work with humility, dedication and a strong sense of duty earn the trust of the people.

President Droupadi Murmu described the achievement as a reflection of the confidence reposed in Modi's leadership and highlighted advances in governance, economic resilience and welfare delivery during his tenure. Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan termed it a historic milestone representing an era of transformation. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said the achievement symbolised the strength of Indian democracy and public trust. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh hailed Modi as a "Karmayogi", while Home Minister Amit Shah credited his leadership with restoring India's global standing and driving major reforms.

NDA leaders, including Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, RS MP Nitish Kumar and former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, also extended their greetings. BJP workers across the country organised prayers and special events to mark the occasion.



Service to the people is the ultimate test of good governance. Only those who work tirelessly with humility and dedication earn the trust of the public.

—Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

World leaders hail Modi's record tenure

World leaders on Wednesday congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi after he became India's longest-serving elected Prime Minister, completing 4,399 consecutive days in office. Leaders from several countries praised his leadership and India's rising global stature. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison called Modi "a true statesman," while Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim lauded his dedication to public service and national development. Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu said the achievement reflected the enduring trust of Indian citizens, and Kenyan President William Ruto hailed Modi's perseverance and commitment to public service. Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih termed the achievement a historic milestone and praised the strengthening of bilateral ties under Modi's leadership.

Modi's Record Tenure

Consecutive days in office: 4,399
First sworn in: May 26, 2014
Current term: Third consecutive term
Record surpassed: Jawaharlal Nehru (4,398 elected days)

Jhalmuri moment marks NDA celebration of Modi's record tenure

Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared jhalmuri with NDA leaders during a meeting at Bharat Mandapam on Wednesday, marking 12 years of the NDA government and his record as India's longest-serving elected Prime Minister. West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari served the popular Bengali snack to Modi, who then asked the vendor to offer it to other alliance leaders as well. The Prime Minister later shared a video of the moment on social media. The meeting also featured a group photograph and discussions on governance, while NDA leaders congratulated Modi on completing 4,399 consecutive days in office.

CM meets Sonia, Rahul amid key political developments

NEW DELHI

Karnataka Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar on Wednesday met Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra at 10 Janpath in New Delhi, amid a politically significant day marked by developments within opposition parties.

Earlier in the day, Shivakumar visited the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) office and the Youth Congress headquarters in the national capital. He later interacted with Mahila Congress leaders and workers at Indira Bhawan.

The meeting at Sonia Gandhi's residence comes at a time when opposition politics is witnessing heightened activity. Earlier on Wednesday, TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee also met Rahul Gandhi. The interaction followed recent discussions between Sonia Gandhi and Mamata Banerjee amid the ongoing political turmoil within the Trinamool Congress.

K'taka seeks Centre's nod for major transport projects

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Wednesday urged the Centre to expedite approvals for several key transport and urban infrastructure projects aimed at easing mobility in and around Bengaluru. In a memorandum submitted to Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, the state sought clearance for the 44.65-km double-decker Metro corridor under Phase III, the revised ₹40,425-crore cost estimate for Metro Phase II, and the ₹25,999-crore Metro Phase III-A project connecting Sarjapur and Hebbal.

Ashoka alleges ₹39,000 cr garbage tender scam, submits complaint to Governor

BENGALURU

Leader of Opposition R. Ashoka on Wednesday accused the Karnataka government of orchestrating a massive ₹39,000 crore scam through a long-term garbage processing tender awarded for Bengaluru's waste management system.

Addressing a press conference, Ashoka alleged that the 35-year contract awarded to MSWS Solutions Limited, reportedly linked to the Ramky Group, involved irregularities and inflated costs. He claimed that nearly ₹10,000 crore of the total project value amounted to kickbacks and described the deal as the "largest garbage scam in the country."

According to Ashoka, Bengaluru currently spends about ₹1,344 crore annually on garbage collection, transportation, processing and civic worker salaries. He alleged that the new agreement would sharply increase waste-processing charges, placing a massive financial burden on the city's civic administration over the coming decades. The BJP leader questioned the decision to award both North and South Bengaluru packages to a single company despite objections reportedly raised by the Finance Department.

This is the biggest garbage scam in the country. The tender will impose an enormous burden on Bengaluru and must be cancelled immediately.

—R Ashoka, Leader of Opposition

GARBAGE TENDER CONTROVERSY

- **Project value:** ₹39,000 crore disarmament
- **Contract period:** 30 years plus 5-year extension
- **Company awarded:** MSWS Solutions Limited
- **Alleged kickbacks claimed by BJP:** ₹10,000 crore
- Complaint submitted to Governor seeking probe

Ashoka acting as garbage mafia agent, says CM

NEW DELHI

Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on Opposition Leader R. Ashoka, accusing him of acting as an "agent of the garbage mafia" in Bengaluru. Rejecting allegations of kickbacks in garbage management tenders, Shivakumar said the government's decisions were transparent and open to scrutiny. "Let them conduct any investigation. Even if there is misuse of ₹10 crore, I am ready to face it," he said. The Chief Minister alleged that political rivals were unable to accept his leadership and were resorting to jealousy-driven politics. He also defended the government's guarantee schemes, saying they were meant only for eligible beneficiaries in Karnataka.

Former PM says he never sought renomination, values long-standing ties

My relationship with Modi won't end over Rajya Sabha seat: Deve Gowda

BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister and JD(S) patriarch H D Deve Gowda on Wednesday dismissed speculation surrounding his Rajya Sabha future, asserting that his relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not dependent on a parliamentary seat.

Addressing a press conference in Bengaluru, Gowda clarified that he had never sought renomination to the Rajya Sabha and had not approached the BJP leadership regarding another term. His current tenure in the Upper House is set to end on June 25, bringing to a close a long career in elected public office.

The veteran leader said his association with Modi has evolved over the years and would continue irrespective of political developments.

Responding to criticism from the Congress that the BJP had denied him an opportunity to continue in the Rajya Sabha, Gowda maintained that he had not requested a fresh nomination. He added that had he been interested, he could have discussed the matter during his recent visit to New Delhi.

Reflecting on his political journey, Gowda noted that his public life began in 1960 with the Taluk Development Board and has spanned more than six decades.

I have developed a relationship with Modi since 2014. My relationship with the Prime Minister will not end because of one Rajya Sabha seat.

—HD Deve Gowda, JD(S) patriarch

KARNATAKA'S KEY DEMANDS TO CENTRE ON URBAN TRANSPORT

Double-Decker Metro (Phase III)	Metro Phase II Revised Cost
44.65 km elevated corridor	Length: 72.095 km
Project cost: ₹9,700 crore	Stations: 61
Fully funded by Karnataka	Cost revised from ₹26,405 crore to ₹40,425 crore
Centre asked for final implementation approval	State seeks early approval

Metro Phase III-A	Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)
Sarjapur–Hebbal corridor	*Proposed links:*
Length: 37.804 km	Bengaluru–Mysuru
Cost: ₹25,999 crore	Bengaluru–Kanakapura
Revised DPR submitted on April 29, 2026	Bengaluru–Tumakuru
Approval requested	Bengaluru–Chikkaballapur
	Bengaluru–Kolar

Objective: Faster regional connectivity and improved commuter mobility.

US-IRAN TENSIONS

Trump warns Iran of consequences as tensions escalate

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Wednesday warned that Iran would "pay the price" for delaying negotiations, as hostilities between the two countries intensified despite ongoing diplomatic efforts to secure a lasting settlement.

In a strongly worded post on his Truth Social platform, Trump claimed that Iran's military had been "completely defeated" and accused Tehran of missing an opportunity to reach a favourable agreement with Washington.

The remarks marked a sharp shift in tone from comments made a day earlier, when Trump had suggested negotiations were in their final stages and could conclude within days.

They've taken too long to negotiate a deal that would have been great for them, now they will have to pay the price.

—Donald Trump, US President

The latest escalation follows military exchanges between the United States and Iran that have strained a ceasefire in effect since April. US forces reportedly carried out retaliatory strikes after an American helicopter was downed on Monday. Iranian media reported explosions along the country's southern coast following the strikes.

US Central Command later confirmed that American Air Force and Navy assets had targeted command-and-control, defence and surveillance facilities. In response, Iran said it launched attacks on American military bases in Jordan and Bahrain.

Why tensions flared again

The latest confrontation erupted after Iran was accused of downing a US military helicopter earlier this week. Washington responded with strikes targeting military infrastructure, while Tehran retaliated by claiming attacks on American bases in the region. The developments have raised concerns about the future of ongoing negotiations aimed at achieving a durable peace agreement between the two longtime adversaries.

US-IRAN CONFLICT: KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- **April 2026:** Ceasefire between the United States and Iran takes effect.
- **June 9:** US helicopter reportedly downed, triggering retaliation.
- **June 10:** US conducts strikes on Iranian military facilities
- **June 10:** Iran claims attacks on US bases in Jordan and Bahrain.
- **Current status:** Diplomatic talks continue amid renewed military tensions.

Dissident MPs deepen crisis for Mamata Banerjee

KOLKATA

The political turmoil within the Trinamool Congress (TMC) intensified on Wednesday as reports emerged that as many as 19 Members of Parliament have aligned with a growing dissident faction, raising fresh questions about the party's unity and future under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee.

The latest developments come amid a series of setbacks for the party. Earlier in the day, Rajya Sabha MP Sushmita Dev resigned from Parliament, becoming the second TMC MP this week to quit after Sukhendu Sekhar Ray stepped down from both the party and the Upper House.

According to reports, MPs linked to the dissident camp include Yusuf Pathan, Abu Taher Khan, Partha Bhowmik, Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, Bapi Haldar, Sayoni Ghosh, Rachana Banerjee, Asit Mal, K Rahman, Sharmila Sarkar, Mitali Bag, Shatrughan Sinha, Kalipada Soren, June Malia, Mala Roy, Dev Adhikari, Satabdi Roy, Jagadish Chandra Barma Basunia and Arup Chakrabarty.

The rebellion gained momentum after MP Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar claimed that nearly 20 TMC MPs were seeking alignment with the NDA. She has emerged as a key face of the dissident group challenging the party leadership.

QUICK READ

4-day Krishi Mela in Bengaluru from Oct 15

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Marking its diamond jubilee year, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru, will host Krishi Mela from October 15 to 18 on GKVK campus, focusing on attracting the next generation to agriculture. The four-day event, themed "Varied agriculture: for the next generation", will showcase emerging opportunities and agri-technologies aimed at modernising farming and encouraging youth participation. The mela will feature exhibitions, crop demonstrations and displays of new varieties, along with expert interactions where farmers can seek scientific guidance. Progressive farmers will be honoured for their achievements.

Motorists may avail 50% discount on pending fines

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
After a successful discount scheme for pending traffic fines last year, from November 21 till December 12, the government announced a 20-day period for motorists to clear pending traffic e-challans, issued before May 2026, at half the penalty amount. The government has provided motorists multiple online and offline options to view and clear their pending fines. Each e-challan is accompanied with a photograph as proof of violation of traffic rules.Motorists can make payments through Karnataka State Police (KSP) app, BTP ASTraM app, Kar nataka One and Bangalore One portals, as well as at the nearest traffic police station or Traffic Management Centre. Vehicle owners can avail of this 50% discount from June 21 to July 10.

JP Nagar Road made one-way to clear flyover jam

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Traffic police have converted a crucial stretch of 11th A Main Road in JP Nagar into a one-way street to end gridlocks at the exit of the recently opened double-decker flyover.The move aims to streamline heavy influx of vehicles during peak hours. Prior to this modification, 11th A Main operated as a bi-directional road, leading to massive traffic snarls. Innumerable vehicles attempting to travel towards the flyover would clash with descending traffic, locking up the intersection. When motorists reach the end of JP Nagar double-decker flyover, the road splits into two primary arteries: 11th A Main and 11th B Main.

Bannerghatta dust storm to die down, but not for long

After a lapse considerable period, the filling of potholes and asphalting work is take up but is progressing at a snail's pace

BENGALURU

For thousands of commuters braving potholes, craters, and bone-rattling rides on Bannerghatta Road, here is both good news.

After months of growing public frustration, civic authorities have started repair on one of south Bengaluru's busiest roads. It's only patchwork, complete resurfacing appears to be nowhere in sight. Over the past two days, Bengaluru South City Corporation (BSCC) has been filling potholes with bitumen and tar between Vega City Mall Junction and Arekere Junction, bringing relief to motorists.

This stretch is notorious for damaged surfaces and slow-moving traffic. The repairs come just as Bengaluru welcomed the monsoon. If the season starts in full force, poor road conditions are expected to worsen further.

We cannot begin road restoration until the pipeline work is completed. We are not satisfied with the patchwork carried out by BWSSB so far. Around 600–700 metres of work is still pending. Decisions on road restoration will be taken based on the progress made.

—KN Ramesh, Commissioner, BSCC.

Officials said the current exercise is a temporary measure aimed at making the road safer and more navigable during the rainy season. We will complete the pothole-filling process in 2-3 days. There is some work pending from BWSSB, which is preventing us from taking up complete relaying of the road, a senior BSCC official said.

Officials admitted that fund crunch has deterred them from resurfacing the road.

Initially, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation (BMRCL) was expected to complete the damaged portions of the road after Metro construction was over and Rs 12.5 crores is set aside for now. But the condition of the road has become so bad the amount is not sufficient to complete repairs.

BMRCL had deposited the money with BSCC and told the latter to undertake repair work. How can we restore the road with that meagre amount, asked a senior civic official.

With the broken road triggering terse reactions from the public, BSCC has transferred the proposed road development project to Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Ltd (BSMILE), which has proposed to take up white-topping on the road and is readying a detailed project report for comprehensive redevelopment of the corridor. Officials estimate that proper road reconstruction, drainage works, and white-topping along the six-lane stretch could cost between Rs 85 crore and Rs 100 crore.

Priority to provide infra to every village: MLA Somashekar

BENGALURU

MLA ST Somashekar said that sincere efforts will be made to provide infrastructure to every village in Yeshwantpur constituency and develop it into a model constituency.

Speaking at the inauguration of the Rajakaluve barrier development work at a cost of about Rs 18 crore in Ganigarapalya of SRS Extention of Talaghattapur ward of Yeshwantpur assembly constituency, he said that sincere efforts will be made to adequately provide basic amenities such as roads, sewerage, drinking water and street lighting to all the villages in the constituency. He said that the grant released by the state government has been used for drinking water supply, roads, sewerage, educational progress etc. by distributing it adequately to all the wards of the constituency and the villages under the Gram Panchayat limits, and the pace of development has been increased, and the concerned officials have been instructed to take necessary steps for development in the constituency as soon as possible.

Former BBMP member Arya Srinivas, Ward President Arun Kumar, former Block President Amruth Gowda, General Secretary Jayakumar, Prakash, Women's wing President Soumya, Rani and others were present.

Man attacks brothers for not heeding to weed demand

BENGALURU

In a shocking case, a stranger approached a 31-year-old man for weed and later injured him and his elder brother with a trimmer.

According to the complaint filed by DN Anith, a resident of Metro Layout in Nayandahalli, who runs a dog-breeding business, was standing near the compound of his residence along with a friend when a stranger, identified by police as Lohith (30), approached them and asked for weed. When Anith said he had no weed, Lohith got into an argument with him. Lohith then went to a nearby shop, where his father works as a tailor, and got a trimmer from there.

He returned and asked Anith for drinking water. After drinking water, Lohith tried to attack Anith with the trimmer. Hearing the commotion, Anith's elder brother, Punith, rushed to intervene.

Lohith turned on him and struck him above the eye and on the chest with the trimmer. Lohith also inflicted injuries to Anith's head, arm, and skin above his eye before trying to flee.

However, he was caught with the help of residents. Punith called the 112 helpline, police rushed to the spot and detained Lohith. The injured brothers were treated in a private hospital. A case was registered under BNS Sections 118 (voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt by dangerous weapons or means) and 351 (criminal conspiracy) at Chandra Layout police station.

Lohith was arrested and then released on station bail. Lohith had earlier attacked a woman in Padarayanapura in a similar manner, and a case was registered against him at Byatarayana pura police station.

Lohith's father claimed he is mentally disturbed, but he is not undergoing any treatment.

Default sentence in cheque bounce cases cannot exceed 6 months: HC

BENGALURU

In a significant ruling on cheque-bounce cases, the high court has held that in prosecutions under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, where the maximum substantive sentence is two years' imprisonment, the default sentence for non-payment of compensation cannot exceed six months.

Justice M Nagaprasanna made this observation while ordering release of Dinesh Kripalani, a resident of Bengaluru. In December 2017, Dinesh entered into a loan agreement with M/s Jupiter Capital Ltd, Bengaluru, for Rs 10 crore, and Rs 5.9 crore loan amount was disbursed.

In August 2020, for repayment of the remaining loan amount along with interest, Dinesh issued three cheques for amounts of Rs 50 lakh, Rs 3.5 crore and Rs 5 crore. All three cheques were dishonoured on the same day and after issuance of statutory demand notices, Jupiter Capital Ltd registered a case under Section 138 of the NI Act against Dinesh in 2021. On December 14, 2023, Dinesh was convicted in all the three cases.

He was fined Rs 61.7 lakh, Rs 4.3 crore and Rs 6.2 crore for the three dishonoured cheques. If he defaulted in paying the fine, he was to undergo simple imprisonment for three months in each case, totalling nine months.

After perusing the provisions cited by Dinesh, and the judgment of the Delhi high court in a similar case, Justice Nagaprasanna noted that legislative intent underlying the provision is luminous and that the imprisonment in default is not to assume the character of a disproportionately oppressive penalty, but is intended merely as a coercive mechanism to secure payment of fine.

Justice Nagaprasanna also referred to a Delhi High Court ruling that held the statutory ceiling under Section 65 is absolute, and that imprisonment in default cannot exceed one-fourth of the maximum sentence prescribed for the offence. Accordingly, in cheque-bounce cases under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, where the maximum substantive punishment is two years' imprisonment, the default sentence cannot exceed six months, he said.

The present adjudication concerns only the legality and proportionality of continued incarceration in default of payment of fine and shall not eclipse or dilute the statutory right of the complainant or the state to pursue recovery proceedings in accordance with law, Justice Nagaprasanna specified in his order.

CET counselling postponed over seat matrix delay

BENGALURU

Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) has postponed the Common Entrance Test (CET) counselling for engineering and other professional courses because of a delay in receiving the final seat matrix and fee structure from the higher education department.

Officials said the process has been pushed back by at least three days and is likely to commence on June 13, subject to receipt of the final seat matrix. The seat matrix and fee structure have to be approved by the higher education minister.

With the portfolio not allocated to any Minister yet under the DK Shivakumar government, the Principal Secretary will have to directly seek approval from the Chief Minister.

The department is going through the objections received for the draft seat matrix. Officials have sought an appointment with the CM and are hoping to secure approval for the matrix soon, an official said.

With the delay in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), state government had decided to commence CET counselling, independent of the schedule for medical and dental courses. The seat matrices for other courses, including agriculture, veterinary, pharmacy, and nursing. are also expected in the next few days. However, with engineering being the biggest of all, KEA can begin the option-entry process only as soon as it gets the engineering seat matrix. Agriculture, veterinary, pharmacy matrices are likely to be shared in 2-3 days, said the official.

Good news for Peenya flyover passengers after 5 years

BENGALURU

The Peenya flyover on Tumakuru Road is strong and capable of handling all types of vehicles. This will be officially announced soon.

The Dr Sri Shivakumara Swamiji Flyover on National Highway-4 in Peenya, Asia's largest industrial area, which has been in the news for one reason or another since December 2021. After taking several steps, it is now certain that this flyover will be strong enough to handle all types of vehicles on all days of the week. The flyover has passed various tests, including load testing, and only an official announcement is awaited.

K'taka to recruit 2.5k computer science teachers for primary schools

BENGALURU

With Computer Science being introduced from class 1 at Karnataka Public Schools, the department of school education and literacy has decided to recruit dedicated computer science teachers.

For the current academic year, the department will recruit 2500 teachers. These posts will be carved out of the 6117 primary school teacher posts available. A separate cadre for these teachers in the department are being created and an amendment to cadre and recruitment rules is under process for this purpose.

The eligibility criteria for the recruitment of IT teachers will be issued soon, said the department. We are discussing about it. It could be BSc computer science or any related subjects, said an official. It may be recalled that the department has already allowed engineering graduates to teach as Graduate Primary Tea chers (class 6 to 8). An amendment was made to recruitment rules in 2021 to allow engineering degree holders to teach subjects like Mathematics and Science in government schools and PU colleges. They could write the Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) in the year 2021.

The IT teachers will be paid Rs 44425 - Rs 83700 as per the rules. Computer education is being introduced in 200 schools in Kalyan Karnataka region and 500 in other parts of the state this year as a part of upgrading the schools to KPS. Department officials said that the service of these teachers will be extended to non KPS schools too, depending upon the need.

Currently there are many schools with sufficient computers available thanks to various donors, but no eligible teachers to train teachers in it.

'Claim of man's death due to suffocation false'

BENGALURU

South Western Railway (SWR) has dismissed as false and factually incorrect, a social media claim that a passenger died of suffocation due to overcrowding in a train at Tumakuru railway station.

The clarification came after a video showing an unconscious man being carried on a stretcher at a station went viral on social media.

The post accompanying the video alleged that the passenger had died due to suffocation in an overcrowded general compartment. SWR stated that Malthesh (37), from Ranebennur, was travelling with his family on Train No. 11022 Chalukya Express when he suffered a sudden medical emergency caused by a pre-existing heal th condition. He lost consciousness during the journey. Upon the train's arrival at Tumakuru station, Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel attended to him, administered first aid and shifted him by ambulance to the Government Hospital in Tumakuru, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

SWR also rejected allegations that overcrowding contributed to the incident. Officials said unreserved ticket sales at the preceding boarding stations were relatively low, with 10 tickets issued at Dharmapuri, 40 at Hosur and 40 at SMVT Bengaluru.

Farmer attempts suicide near Vidhana Soudha

BENGALURU

Chaos prevailed outside Vidhana Soudha when a farmer from Tarikere in Chikkamagaluru climbed a tree, saying he will jump off as National Highways Authority of India and state government had betrayed him over land acquisition.

This is not the first time TN Vishnukumar is protesting against alleged injustice. He chopped down a sandalwood tree inside a legislator's home this February and climbed a high-tension power transmission tower in Tarikere in June last year as part of his agitation against land acquisition.

RELIEF FOR FARMER

Harohalli land acquisition dropped after claim of homes, burial sites

BENGALURU

At a time when back-to-back land acquisition proposals across Bengaluru's fast-developing outskirts have left rural and agrarian communities on edge, Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) offered an unexpected reprieve to residents of Kanchugaranahalli in Bidadi hobli.

It stepped back from acquiring select parcels of land earmarked for Harohalli 5th Phase Industrial Area. The decision, taken after the high court's intervention, comes as a rare moment of relief for villagers who were locked in a prolonged legal battle to protect not just their homes and farmland, but something far more personal, resting places of their ancestors. The denotified lands, officials confirmed, included residential structures and burial sites that villagers said were inseparable from their identity, memory and history. Harohalli 5th Phase Industrial Area, proposed in Bidadi hobli of Ramanagara taluk in Bengaluru South district, forms part of the government's broader push to expand industrial infrastructure around the city.

The project was first set in motion through a preliminary notification issued in November 2019, covering over 1,118 acres spread across villages, including Kanchugaranahalli, Kanchugaranahalli Kaval, Mudenahalli, and Yarehalli in Harohalli region. A final notification followed in July 2020, notifying more than 679 acres under the acquisition umbrella for industrial development. However, for several landowners, the lines drawn on govt maps cut through their lived realities, homes where families have lived for generations and sacred burial sites where their ancestors were laid to rest. What initially began as objections soon evolved into a legal battle.

Villagers approached high court, arguing that the acquisition overlooked the presence of houses, ancestral burial sites and culturally significant spaces that couldn't be reduced to monetary compensation alone. In its order dated December 10, 2024, the Court quashed the final acquisition notification for specific survey numbers, acknowledging the concerns rais ed by petitioners. That intervention became the turning point. Acting on the Court's directions, KIADB officials revisited the disputed land parcels, measu ring over 2.2 acres in survey numbers 29/3 and 29/6 of Kanchugaranahalli near Bidadi, exercised powers under KIADB Act to exclude them from the acquisition process.

QUICK READ

Khandre opposes change in Bengaluru–Bidar flight

Bidar

Bidar Rural Development Minister Eshwar B. Khandre has expressed concern over the revised Bengaluru–Bidar–Bengaluru flight schedule effective. In a letter to the Chief Minister and Infrastructure Development Minister, he said the earlier morning timing was more convenient for business travellers, tourists and passengers from nearby regions. The previous schedule had the flight departing Bengaluru at 6.30 a.m. and returning by 9.30 a.m., which he noted was widely preferred. The new afternoon timing, he argued, may reduce passenger traffic and affect the viability of the service. Khandre also highlighted that the state is providing Viability Gap Funding and urged authorities to restore the earlier schedule.

Revoor challenges FIRs, stands firm on remarks

Kalaburagi

Former MLA Dattatraya Patil Revoor has said that he will not be intimidated even if 100 FIRs are filed against him. Addressing a press conference in Kalaburagi, he said an FIR was registered over his remarks during a BJP protest, where he referred to an alleged past statement by late minister Qamrul Islam. He maintained that he only cited earlier statements and did not make any inflammatory comments. Revoor also alleged that cases related to past incidents were withdrawn by the previous government. He defended his public record, saying his family has long been active in Kalaburagi public life and has never engaged in hate speech. BJP leaders were present at the briefing.

Kalagi police recover 15 lost mobile phones

Kalagi

Kalagi Police in Kalaburagi district have recovered 15 lost mobile phones worth about ₹4.8 lakh and returned them to their owners. The phones were traced after complaints were filed by users who had lost their devices within the Kalagi Police Station limits. Acting on the complaints, police used the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) portal and technical tracking methods to locate the devices. All recovered phones were handed over to their rightful owners at the police station. The owners expressed gratitude for the swift action. Police officials urged the public to report lost or stolen phones promptly to improve recovery chances through the CEIR system.

Vijayapura sets interview drive for Bank jobs

Vijayapura

The District Employment Exchange Centre in Vijayapura will conduct a direct interview on June 16 at 10 a.m. for Associate Relationship Manager posts at IDFC FIRST Bank. The recruitment drive aims to fill vacancies across various taluks in the district. Candidates with any bachelor's degree and below 28 years of age are eligible to attend. Applicants must carry their resume, educational certificates and other relevant documents.

Kalaburagi Congress holds protest over fuel price rise

Kalaburagi Congress workers staged a protest against rising fuel and LPG prices, demanding immediate rollback and relief measures.

KALABURAGI

The District Congress Committee staged a protest in Kalaburagi condemning the recent increase in petrol, diesel and LPG cylinder prices, alleging that the hike has placed an additional burden on common households.

The protest march began from the District Congress Office on Sedam Road and proceeded towards Annapurna Cross, where party workers and leaders gathered in large numbers. Participants raised slogans against the Central Government, accusing it of implementing anti-people economic policies.

Congress leaders claimed that the continuous rise in fuel and cooking gas prices has severely impacted poor and middle-class families. They demanded an immediate rollback of the price hike and urged the government to take steps to provide relief to consumers.

At Annapurna Cross, protesters briefly staged a road blockade, which caused temporary disruption to traffic in the area. Police personnel were deployed to manage the situation and ensure smooth movement of vehicles.

Speaking during the protest, party leader Praveen Patil Haraval said that frequent increases in fuel prices have created financial pressure on ordinary citizens. He said that petrol, diesel and LPG rates have been rising consistently, affecting household budgets and transportation costs.

He urged the Central Government to reconsider its pricing policies and take immediate corrective measures to reduce the burden on the public.

He also warned that continued price hikes would lead to stronger public opposition in the coming days.

Several senior Congress leaders, including district women's wing president Renuka Singe and Youth Congress district president Shakeel Ahmed Saradgi, participated in the demonstration along with other party functionaries and workers.

The protest concluded with leaders reiterating their demand for immediate reduction in fuel and LPG prices, stating that relief measures are necessary to protect the interests of common people across the country.

Abandoned quarries turn deadly in Vadagera

YADGIR

Abandoned laterite quarries in Vadagera taluk have become dangerous death traps, with residents demanding strict action after repeated fatal accidents in water-filled pits.

Abandoned laterite (murram) quarries spread across agricultural lands in Vadagera taluk have become a major safety concern, with residents warning that they are turning into death traps following a series of fatal accidents.

The issue has resurfaced after a recent tragedy on Sunday in which two schoolgirls and a woman reportedly died after slipping into a water-filled quarry. Locals said this is not an isolated incident, as similar deaths were reported in previous years involving children from nearby villages.

Several hazardous quarry pits have been identified across the taluk, including near Kadangera (B), along the Vadagera–Tumkur district road, the Gaddesugur–Srirangapur stretch, and areas surrounding Kamala Nayak Tanda and Beeranakal village.

Residents allege that contractors engaged in road and irrigation works often enter private agreements with landowners to extract laterite soil. In many cases, excavation is carried out on agricultural land without transferring ownership, leaving behind large unregulated pits after extraction is completed.

Locals further claim that although permissions specify limits on excavation depth, some pits are dug as deep as 50 to 60 feet, violating safety norms. These deep depressions remain unfilled after project completion and are often left unattended.

During monsoon seasons or when water accumulates, these abandoned quarries fill up and become dangerous pools, posing serious risks to children and unsuspecting residents.

Citizens have demanded stricter enforcement and suggested that contractors be required to formally purchase land before excavation to ensure accountability and proper restoration.

Vadagera Tahsildar Mangala M. said details of all quarry sites are being collected through village officials and will be submitted to the Deputy Commissioner for further action. She added that the Mines and Geology Department is empowered to take necessary steps in such cases.

Senior Geologist Viresh stated that permissions for quarrying are issued only after assessing safety measures, excavation dimensions and payment of prescribed fees, and that approvals are granted strictly as per regulations.

Despite these assurances, residents continue to demand urgent intervention to prevent further loss of life and ensure rehabilitation of abandoned quarry sites.

Contract employees of Gulbarga University staged a protest demanding reinstatement, leading to campus tension before VC's assurance.

Contract staff protest at Gulbarga University ends siege

KALABURAGI

Contract employees of Gulbarga University ended their siege of the administrative building on Tuesday evening after Vice-Chancellor Prof. Shashikant Udikeri assured them that all 281 terminated contract staff would be reinstated shortly.

The protest had been ongoing for 45 days after 281 contract employees were relieved from service following the expiry of the outsourcing agreement. The workers have been demanding immediate reappointment, citing livelihood concerns and alleged delays in the tender renewal process.

Tension escalated on campus when protesters gathered in front of the administrative building and blocked entry and exit points, preventing university officials, including the Vice-Chancellor and Registrar, from leaving the premises for some time. The situation briefly turned volatile with reports of pushing and heated exchanges.

The protestors also raised slogans against university authorities, accusing them of delaying the implementation of decisions taken in earlier meetings. Police personnel were deployed on campus under the supervision of senior officers to maintain order and prevent further escalation.

Later in the evening, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Shashikant Udikeri addressed the protesters and assured them that the services of all 281 employees would be continued. He stated that technical issues related to the tender process had been resolved and that a new contractor had already been selected.

He further assured that all remaining formalities would be completed within a week, after which the employees would be reinstated without disruption. Following this assurance, the protesters withdrew the siege but continued their indefinite dharna, demanding written confirmation of their reinstatement.

During the protest, two women employees, Geetha and Kavyashree, reportedly fell ill due to exhaustion and were shifted to ESIC Hospital for treatment. Hospital sources confirmed that both are in stable condition.

Employee union leaders, including association president Sheelaprakash Doddamani and secretary Chandrashekhar Savalagi, said the agitation will continue until the reinstatement process is fully completed and implemented on the ground.

Old prison quarters endanger families in Lingsugur

RAICHUR

Staff quarters attached to the Lingsugur Sub-Jail in Raichur district have deteriorated into a highly unsafe condition, raising serious concerns among prison employees and their families who continue to reside in the ageing buildings. The residential complex, constructed nearly five decades ago near the sub-jail premises, was originally built to accommodate prison staff. However, years of neglect and lack of major renovation have left the structures in a dilapidated state, forcing occupants to live under constant fear of collapse, especially during the monsoon season.Out of six quarters built for staff, only four are currently in use. The remaining employees, due to unsafe conditions and lack of basic amenities, have been forced to shift to rented accommodation in Lingsugur town, adding financial burden on their families.

Bidar officials warn dealers on fertilizer MRP violations

BIDAR

Strict action will be taken against fertilizer dealers selling products above the government-fixed Maximum Retail Price (MRP), warned Bidar Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Dr. Girish Badole during an inspection of fertilizer outlets in the city.

Dr. Badole conducted a surprise visit to fertilizer shops in the Gandhi Gunj market area to review stock availability, pricing practices and distribution systems during the ongoing Kharif agricultural season. He instructed dealers to strictly follow MRP guidelines and ensure transparency in all transactions with farmers.

He also directed that receipts must be issued for every fertilizer purchase, stressing that farmers should not face any inconvenience in accessing essential agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, seeds and related materials during the critical sowing period.

Addressing officials and traders, the CEO emphasized the importance of maintaining a smooth supply chain and instructed Agriculture Department officers to closely monitor fertilizer distribution to prevent shortages or malpractice. He warned that legal action would be initiated against any dealer found violating pricing norms or engaging in overcharging.

Given concerns over the availability of DAP fertilizer, Dr. Badole advised officials to promote awareness among farmers regarding alternative nutrient options, including complex fertilizers and modern products such as Nano Urea and Nano DAP. He said such alternatives could help reduce dependence on single fertilizer types and ensure balanced soil nutrition.

As part of the inspection, he also reviewed seed distribution systems for the 2026–27 Kharif season. At the Janawad Raitha Samparka Kendra, he examined the Seed Management Information System (MIS), seed distribution records and Farmer Identification (FID) data to ensure proper implementation of distribution protocols.

He later visited seed distribution centres and a Primary Agricultural Credit Cooperative Society in Koutha (B) village in Aurad taluk, inspecting seed stocks and farmer service arrangements.

Agriculture department officials accompanied him during the inspection, and the district administration reiterated its commitment to ensuring adequate supply of fertilizers and seeds while protecting farmers from unfair trade practices during the agricultural season.

Kalaburagi–Bengaluru flight service resumes after eight months

KALABURAGI

Air connectivity between Kalaburagi and Bengaluru received a major boost on Tuesday as the flight service resumed after remaining suspended for nearly eight months, bringing relief to frequent travelers and the business community in the region.

The service was formally restarted at Kalaburagi Airport by MLA Khaneez Fatima and Deputy Commissioner Ikram Sharif.

The airport terminal was decorated for the occasion, and passengers were welcomed as operations recommenced after the long gap.

Operated by Star Air, the daily flight will depart Bengaluru at 6:00 a.m. and arrive in Kalaburagi at 7:10 a.m.

The return flight will leave Kalaburagi at 7:40 a.m. and reach Bengaluru by 8:50 a.m., offering convenient early morning connectivity for business travelers, students, and officials.

Speaking at the inauguration, Deputy Commissioner Ikram Sharif said the restoration of the service would significantly improve regional connectivity and support economic development.

RAICHUR FOREST COVER EXPANDS BY 2,800 HECTARES

RAICHUR

In a significant environmental development, Raichur district has recorded an increase of nearly 2,800 hectares in forest cover over the past three years, according to the Raichur Forest Division. The district, traditionally known for its low green cover, has shown steady improvement due to revised afforestation strategies and sustained plantation efforts.

Officials said Raichur currently has about 32,747 hectares of recorded forest land, which accounts for only 3.9 percent of its total geographical area of 8,386 sq. km. The region is largely composed of scrub forests and dry mixed forest zones, with rocky terrain posing long-standing challenges to large-scale afforestation.

Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF) Suresh Babu said earlier plantation drives often suffered low survival rates due to inadequate rainfall, poor maintenance and encroachment issues. To address this, the department changed its approach by raising saplings in nurseries for two to three years before transplanting them into forest areas, significantly improving survival rates.He added that four nurseries in the district now cultivate species such as teak, sandalwood, jackfruit, mango and other native trees suited to local climatic conditions. These saplings are carefully nurtured before being planted in selected forest regions.

Officials noted that the highest increase in forest cover has been observed in Raichur and Manvi taluks. In addition, the Social Forestry Department has contributed significantly to greening efforts across rural and non-forest areas.DCF Social Forestry Vanita R.R. said 1,59,460 saplings have been planted under various programmes in the last three years, with a target of 66,440 saplings planned for the current year across 258 hectares.

Deputy Commissioner Purvika S. said ongoing plantation drives, including those supported through CSR initiatives of SPMCIL, aim to plant 1.20 lakh saplings across the district.

VOTER MAPPING PROGRESS UPDATE

SIR electoral roll revision schedule announced

YADGIR

The Election Commission of India has announced the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) schedule for electoral rolls, with the exercise set to begin on June 20 across Yadgir district. District Election Officer and Deputy Commissioner Pandey Rahul has appealed to the public to extend full cooperation for the preparation of an accurate and transparent voter list.

Addressing a press conference at the Deputy Commissioner's office, Rahul said the revision process will begin with the printing of forms and training of election personnel from June 20 to June 29. He added that a door-to-door voter verification survey will be conducted from June 30 to July 29.

According to the announced timeline, the draft electoral roll will be published on August 5. The period for filing claims and objections will remain open from August 5 to September 4. Officials will dispose of claims and objections between August 5 and October 3, and the final electoral roll will be published on October 7. The qualifying date for the revision has been fixed as October 1.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of public participation in ensuring that no eligible voter is left out and no ineligible entry remains in the list. He said the revision process is crucial for strengthening democratic systems and improving electoral accuracy.Rahul also shared progress on voter mapping across the district. In Shorapur taluk, 94.44 percent of voters have been mapped, while Shahapur has achieved 95.44 percent coverage. Yadgir taluk has recorded 97.71 percent mapping completion.

In Gurumitkal taluk, mapping of over 99 percent of voters has already been completed, while Vadagera and Hunasagi taluks have also reported coverage above 94 percent. Overall, out of 10,53,496 registered voters in the district, 10,14,221 voters have already been mapped.

Officials said efforts are ongoing to complete the remaining voter mapping before the next phase of verification begins. Additional Deputy Commissioner Ramesh Kolar and Assistant Commissioner Shridhar Gotur were present during the briefing.

QUICK READ

Dharwad Students shine in NMAAS scholarship results

Dharwad

The results of the Central Government NMAAS National Award Education Scholarship examination have been announced. The exam is conducted at national level to support talented poor students with financial assistance. Out of 5965 students, 199 students from Dharwad district have been selected. From Dharwad Rural 87 of 1145 students were selected, from Dharwad City 27 of 685, Hubballi Rural 23 of 930, Hubballi City 24 of 1092, Navalgund 7 of 582, Kundagol 13 of 614 and Kalaghatagi 18 of 917. Officials congratulated selected students for their achievement and encouraged them to continue academic excellence in future studies.

Anti-Malaria and No Tobacco Day held in Belagoor

Chitradurga

An Anti-Malaria Month celebration and World No Tobacco Day programme was organised at the Community Health Centre in Belagoor, Hosadurga taluk. Dental Officer Dr. Suma explained the harmful effects of tobacco use and shared information about nicotine gum and healthy nutrition. BHEO Lalithamma gave awareness on preventing malaria symptoms and maintaining hygiene to control mosquito breeding. Dr. Sahana, SPHCO Nirmala, health staff, ASHA workers and local villagers took part in the programme. Officials said such awareness events help people adopt healthier habits and reduce disease risks in rural communities.

Illegal dumping continues despite warnings in KSRTC Layout

MYSURU

In a striking example of civic apathy, even the watchful gaze of Goddess Chamundeshwari has failed to deter illegal garbage dumpers in KSRTC Layout.Frustrated by the relentless dumping of household waste on an empty site, pourakarmikas in the area adopted an unusual strategy.

They tied a framed picture of Goddess Chamundeshwari to an electric pole overlooking the garbage hotspot, hoping that reverence for the deity would succeed where repeated warnings had failed.But the gamble has not paid off. Today, beneath the image of the city's presiding goddess lies a sprawling heap of plastic bags, food waste, discarded clothes, broken household items and other rubbish.

NS Bhoseraju says no lobbying for ministerial post

Bhoseraju said ministerial posts are decided by CM and party leadership, and he will respect their decision

RAICHUR

Expressing his views on political developments, leader N.S. Bhoseraju stated that he would be happy if he is offered a ministerial position but clarified that he would not engage in any lobbying or pressure tactics to secure the post. He made these remarks while speaking to the media during a public interaction in Raichur district.

Bhoseraju said that ministerial positions are the prerogative of the Chief Minister and the party leadership, and decisions are taken based on multiple political and administrative considerations. He emphasized that he respects the party's internal processes and would abide by whatever decision is taken by the leadership.

He further stated that while holding a ministerial post would provide an opportunity to serve the people more effectively, personal ambition or lobbying for positions is not part of his political approach. According to him, public service should remain the primary focus rather than competition for positions.

The leader also highlighted that political responsibility should be viewed as a platform to implement development-oriented programmes and address public issues. He said that any role assigned by the party should be used to strengthen governance and improve

the delivery of welfare schemes to citizens.

Bhoseraju's statement comes amid ongoing discussions within political circles regarding possible cabinet reshuffles and the allocation of ministerial responsibilities. His remarks are being seen as a reflection of restraint and discipline within the party framework.

Party workers and supporters present during the interaction acknowledged his comments and expressed confidence in the leadership's decision-making process.

The matter is expected to remain under observation as the political situation evolves in the coming days.

Overall, Bhoseraju reiterated that while he would welcome responsibility if entrusted, he would not seek it through lobbying or external influence.

Kalaburagi DC orders ban on minors in risky sports events

KALABURAGI

Authorities directed strict age-appropriate sports participation norms after rising safety concerns, urging schools, associations, and organisers to prevent injuries among children and adolescents

District administration has issued strict instructions to ensure that minors do not participate in dangerous or high-risk sports activities across the district. Deputy Commissioner Ikram Sharif emphasized that safety regulations must be strictly followed by organisers of sports events at all levels, including school, taluk, and district competitions.

The directive comes in the wake of growing concerns over injuries and safety risks involving children and adolescents participating in physically demanding or hazardous sporting activities. Authorities have urged educational institutions, sports associations, and event organisers to enforce age-appropriate participation norms without exception.

The Deputy Commissioner has instructed officials from the education department, youth services, and sports authorities to conduct regular inspections of events and ensure compliance with safety guidelines. He also stressed that prior permission for sports competitions must clearly specify eligibility criteria, especially age restrictions.

Officials have been asked to ensure that adequate safety measures, including medical support, protective equipment, and trained supervision, are in place during all sporting events. Organisers have been warned that violations of the directive will attract strict action under relevant rules and regulations.

The administration has also called for awareness programmes in schools to educate students, teachers, and parents about the risks associated with participation in dangerous sports activities at a young age. Authorities believe that informed participation and proper guidance can significantly reduce the likelihood of accidents and injuries.

Sports departments have been directed to collaborate with educational institutions to promote safe sporting practices and encourage children to participate only in age-appropriate games. The focus, officials said, is to balance physical development with safety and well-being.

The district administration reiterated its commitment to ensuring child safety in all public and institutional activities, particularly in sports, where enthusiasm must be matched with caution and proper regulation.

Bidar administration calls for oath on Anti-Child Labour Day

BIDAR

In view of the upcoming World Day Against Child Labour, the district administration has instructed officials to ensure widespread participation in the anti-child labour oath-taking programme scheduled for June 12. District authorities have emphasized that the observance should be used as an opportunity to strengthen public awareness and reinforce the commitment to eliminating child labour from society.

Deputy Commissioner has directed all departments, including education, labour, women and child welfare, and local governance bodies, to organize oath-taking ceremonies at schools, offices, and public institutions across the district. Officials have been asked to ensure that students, government employees, and members of the public actively participate in the pledge to prevent child labour.

The programme is part of the annual observance of World Day Against Child Labour, which is recognized globally to highlight the importance of protecting children from exploitation and ensuring their right to education.

At BJP marathon event, spokesperson MG Mahesh praised Modi government, citing India's self-reliance in food, medicines, and defence.

BJP organizes public events celebrating Modi leadership

MYSURU

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers across Mysuru on Wednesday celebrated Prime Minister Narendra Modi becoming India's longest-serving elected Prime Minister, surpassing the tenure record of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Marking the milestone and the completion of 12 years of the Modi government, party units organised marathons, walkathons, special prayers, public interactions and sweet distribution programmes in different parts of the city.

At a marathon organised by the BJP Chamundeshwari Nagar Mandal, State BJP spokesperson M.G. Mahesh flagged off the event and highlighted what he described as the transformative achievements of the Modi government. There was a time when India was mocked as a country dependent on others for food, medicines and defence equipment. Today, India has emerged as a nation that provides food and medicines to countries in need and is steadily advancing towards self-reliance through initiatives such as Make in India.

Mahesh noted that welfare schemes including free LPG connections, direct benefit transfers through Jan Dhan bank accounts, the Jal Jeevan Mission, and the Swachh Bharat campaign had significantly improved the quality of life of millions of Indians by addressing basic needs. He also pointed to the rapid expansion of expressways, airports and railway infrastructure, saying these developments had accelerated economic growth.

According to him, schemes such as PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi have strengthened the agricultural sector, while Ayushman Bharat, Jeevan Bima and housing initiatives have provided vital support to economically weaker sections. He added that India's digital revolution, led by UPI-based transactions, has become a model for the world.

Mahesh also praised the development of major pilgrimage centres including Kashi, Ayodhya, Kedarnath, Ujjain, Somnath and Kartarpur, saying these projects had won the appreciation of devotees across the country.Following the marathon, BJP workers offered special prayers in the name of Prime Minister Modi at a local Ganapati temple and distributed prasadam. The marathon began near the banyan tree at K-Block, Ramakrishnanagar, passed through major roads and concluded at Paramahamsa Circle.

Meanwhile, in the Narasimharaja Assembly constituency, BJP leaders organised a series of programmes including a walkathon, special pujas at the 1008 Ganapati Temple, public interactions, tea discussions and sweet distribution to commemorate the occasion. Former mayor Sandesh Swamy and former chairman of Karnataka Exhibition Authority B.P.Manjunath and others led the procession.

In the Krishnaraja (KR) constituency, party workers undertook a felicitation procession from Agrahara Circle to the 101 Ganapati Temple. Special prayers were offered to Sri Vidya Ganapati seeking strength, good health and continued success for Prime Minister Modi in leading the nation. Sweets were later distributed among the public.

Several BJP leaders, former elected representatives, office-bearers and local workers participated in the celebrations held across the city. Krishnaraja MLA T.S.Srivatsa and others were present.

Kalaburagi urges women-friendly measures in SIR process

KALABURAGI

Concerns have been raised in Kalaburagi over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls, with stakeholders demanding stronger focus on women-friendly measures to ensure smoother participation of female voters in the process. Social activists and local representatives have urged the Election Commission and district authorities to adopt inclusive strategies that reduce barriers faced by women during voter verification.

The SIR process, aimed at updating and correcting electoral rolls, involves door-to-door verification, document checks, and public interaction with election officials. While the exercise is intended to improve accuracy and transparency in voter lists, concerns have emerged regarding accessibility, especially for women in rural and semi-urban areas.

Activists point out that many women, particularly homemakers and those from economically weaker sections, face difficulties in producing required documents or being available during verification visits due to household responsibilities. They argue that the process should be designed in a way that accommodates these practical challenges.

Demanding reforms, local voices have called for flexible timings for verification visits, increased deployment of female election staff, and awareness campaigns specifically targeting women voters. They also suggested that help desks and assistance centres be set up at the village.

Prof. B. Krishnappa remembered for championing oppressed unity

BIDAR

Prof. B. Krishnappa, recalling his lifelong commitment to the unity and empowerment of oppressed communities. Addressing a programme, Ramesh Dakulagi said that Prof. Krishnappa dedicated his entire life to strengthening social harmony and fighting inequality through sustained grassroots work and intellectual leadership.

Speakers described Prof. Krishnappa as a towering figure in social justice movements who consistently raised his voice for marginalized groups. They noted that his efforts were not limited to academic or theoretical discussions but extended into real-world activism aimed at building solidarity among disadvantaged communities. His work, they said, inspired several generations of social workers, students, and reformers across Karnataka.

Ramesh Dakulagi highlighted that Prof. Krishnappa believed in the principle of collective strength and unity among oppressed sections of society. He emphasized that Krishnappa's mission was to ensure dignity, equality, and equal opportunities for all, especially those historically excluded from mainstream development.

WORLD DAY RALLY PLANNED AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

MANDYA

The District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, Labour Department, District Child Labour Project Society and District Legal Services Authority will jointly organise a rally and awareness programme on June 12 to observe World Day Against Child Labour 2026.

The rally will begin at 9.30 am and the formal programme will be held at Gandhi Bhavan in the city at 10.30 am. Principal District and Sessions Judge and Chairman of the District Legal Services Authority Subramanya J.N. will inaugurate the rally, while District Judge Manjula Itti will inaugurate the main programme.

Senior Civil Judge and Member Secretary Anand M. will participate, and District Collector Dr Kumar will preside over the event. Special guests include Zilla Panchayat CEO Nandini K.R., SP Dr Shobharani V.J., and Karnataka State Child Rights Commission member Venkatesh.

Officials including Additional DC B.C. Sivanandamurthy, Bar Association President T.S. Satyananda, education and social welfare department officers, and municipal officials will attend. Binu Varghese, State Coordinator of Bachpan Bachao Andolan, will deliver the keynote address.

The programme aims to raise awareness on child labour issues and promote protection of children's rights across Mandya district.

12 Years of Modi Govt transformed India's global standing: MP Yaduveer

MYSURU

Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar on Wednesday said that the 12 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership have laid the foundation for a secure, self-reliant and developed India, transforming the country's image and strengthening its position on the global stage.

Addressing a press conference in Mysuru, he said that when Narendra Modi assumed office in 2014, India was facing economic uncertainty and several developmental challenges. Over the last 12 years, he said, the Union Government has implemented far-reaching reforms, strengthened infrastructure and enhanced national security, enabling India to emerge as one of the world's fastest-growing economies.

He noted that India is no longer viewed merely as a low-cost manufacturing destination but is increasingly recognised for its skilled workforce, innovation, product quality and problem-solving capabilities. This has attracted major global companies and Global Capability Centres (GCCs) to establish operations in the country.

WASTE PAPER TO WISDOM

Recycled notebooks distributed to school kids

MYSURU

Recycled notebooks prepared from unused pages left in old notebooks were distributed to students of various schools in the city at a programme jointly organized on Wednesday by the Department of Public Libraries, the City Central Library at People's Park, and Balya Foundation.

The initiative, launched a few days ago, aims to collect blank pages remaining in partially used notebooks and convert them into new notebooks for underprivileged children.

The organizers believe that pages left unused in one student's notebook can become a valuable educational resource for another child. In line with this objective, the recycled notebooks were distributed on Wednesday to students of CSI Victoria School, Gadichowk Senior Primary School, and Mahajana High School.

As part of the campaign, schoolchildren also contributed unused pages from their own notebooks to support the initiative and help expand the programme.

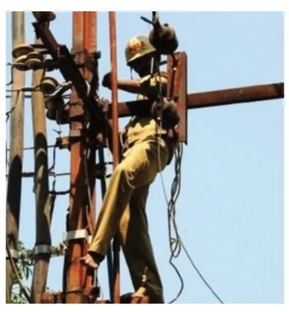
Under the project, members of the public can donate unused notebook pages to public libraries across the city. These pages are then collected by Balya Foundation and other participating organizations, which arrange for them to be systematically bound into notebooks. The completed notebooks are subsequently distributed to those in need. A key objective of the initiative is to reduce the number of trees cut down for paper production by encouraging the reuse of existing paper resources.Speaking after distributing the recycled notebooks to students, City Library Authority Chairman and Regional Commissioner Nitish Patil said that reusing blank notebook pages helps reduce the demand for paper and consequently lowers the rate of tree felling. This campaign as an environmentally friendly initiative and children must contribute unused pages so that they can support the education of others.

QUICK READ

Woman missing since 2024 in Haveri district

Haveri

A complaint has been filed at Bankapur police station stating that a 35-year-old woman, Netra Basavaraja Chalavadi from Bisanahalli village in Shiggaon taluk, went out for work on April 14, 2024, and did not return. The missing woman is 4.2 feet tall, has a round face, pointed nose and dark complexion, and was last seen wearing a yellow short top chudi and blue pants with a white veil. Police Inspector of Bankapur police station requested the public to share any information with the nearest police station.



Mandya power cut announced for maintenance work

Mandya

Power supply will be disrupted at the 66/11 KV Kolkaranadoddy Power Distribution Center in Mandya district on June 12 from 9 am to 6 pm due to emergency maintenance work on the F-01 Kannali NJY feeder route. Power disruption will affect Kolkaranadoddy, Sonaganahalli, Hemmige, Bhutanahosuru, Kabbanahalli, Belur, B Yarahalli, Kagehallada Doddi, Javanegoudanadoddy, Huchalagere, Kannali and nearby villages under the feeder, said Assistant Executive Engineer R. T. Chandramouli in a statement. Officials requested residents to cooperate and plan water and power usage accordingly during the outage.

Chitradurga extends dairy scheme deadline for applicants

Beneficiaries will receive one cross-bred cow or buffalo with a rubber mat at a subsidised cost of ₹63,000

CH NEWS, Chitradurga

The district administration has extended the application deadline till June 22 for the dairy farming scheme for women members of self-help groups under the CEPMIZ programme in mine-affected villages.

Officials said the scheme covers 187 villages across Chitradurga, Holalkere and Hosadurga taluks and aims to support rural women through livestock-based income generation.

A total of 3179 beneficiaries including Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and General Category women will be selected for the benefit.

Each beneficiary will receive one cross-bred cow or buffalo along with a rubber mat at a subsidised total cost of ₹63,000.Women must pay the remaining amount through contribution or bank loan facilitated through self-help groups and Gram Panchayat-level systems.

Applications can be collected from veterinary hospitals, Gram Panchayats and milk cooperative societies and must be submitted in triplicate.Officials said the deadline was extended due to higher public demand and increased participation from eligible women in mining-affected areas.Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Panchayat and CEPMIZ District Committee President Dr. S. Akash said the scheme is aimed at improving livelihoods in affected villages.For more information contact Chief Veterinary Officer of Chitradurga Veterinary Hospital Dr. G. Indirabai-9482943111, Chief Veterinary Officer of Holalkere Veterinary Hospital Dr. Rangaswamy-9972965479, Chief Veterinary Officer of Hosadurga Veterinary Hospital Dr. C. Shivappa-9449783775.

List of Mine-Affected Villages Covered

Chitradurga Taluk : D. Madakaripura, Bedara Bommenahalli, Bommavvanagathihalli, Dindadahalli, Kadleguddu, Mahadevanakatte, Marijogihalli, Megalahalli, Horekenahalli, Jampannahalli, Jampanahatti, Vaddarahatti, Bheemasamudra, Annehal, Bommenahalli, Palya, Hulageri, Chikkenahalli, N. Ballekatte, Ramapur, Kakkeharavu, Doddiganalu, Doddiganalu Hoshatti, Nellikatte, Thurebailu, Veeravva Nagathihalli, Vyasamalapura, Hireguntanur, Hireguntanur Gollarhatti, Siddhapur, Hunasekatte Gollarhatti, Hunasekatte, Konanur, Malali, Sodekola, Musandihal, Godabanalu, Doddapur, Siddavvanahalli, Vadda Alagaghatta, Sirigere, Dyamavvanahalli, Bettada Nagenahalli, Jammenahalli, Kodegehalli, Devapuradahatti, Pandarahalli, Rottihalli, Palakihalli, Chikkaguntanur, Chikkalagatta.

Holalkere Taluk : Chaudenahalli Aranya, Hirekandavadi, Keshavapura, Lingadevarahalli, Sadarahalli, Tanigenahalli, Boranahalli, Kasavanahalli, Mattighatta, Shankaranahalli, Arasinaghatta, Gulihosahalli, Hanumanakatte, Kummanaghatta, Ramenahalli, Shyanubhoganahalli, Chikkandavadi, Brahmapur, Pampapur, Davanahalli, Basavapura, Budipura, Kannenahalli, Banjagondanahalli, Makunte, Tyagadahalli Forest, Gundikere, Gondihalli, Garaga, Harakedevarapura, Maligeranahalli, Kagalagere, Chikkajajur Kavalu, Kashipur, Kanivejogihalli, Kallavva Nagatihalli, Nandihalli, Kondapur, Halenahalli, Kereagalahalli, Gouripur, Apparasanahalli, Kanivehalli, Amritapura, Gunjiganur, Haralikere, Kumaranahalli, Goppenahalli, Ichchaghatta, Nandana Hosur, Nagaraghatta, Woodagere, Arenahalli, Nellikatte, Upparigenahalli.

Hosadurga Taluk: Kenchihalli, Sannakittahalli, Lakkihalli, Kenkere, Ramajjanahalli Kavalu, M. Mallapur, Kudre Kanye Forest, Kanchipura, Mugilodu, Doddabyaladakere, Nakkikere, Chikkabyaladakere, Langragondanahalli, Jayasuvaranpura, Doddakittadahalli, Siddagondanahalli, Badarahalli, Madadakere, Bevinahalli, Sevanagar, Hanumanahalli, Chikkathekalavatti, Atimogge, Bukkasagar, Janakal, Seeranakatte, Naganayakanakatte, Granthapur, Mattodu, Kappanayakanahalli, Balenahalli, Gollarahalli, Ayyanahalli, Jogihalli (Bogihalli), Bandihalli, Kaggalakatte, Kittadalu, Mangasandra, Kadavigere, Rangavavanahalli, Doddathekalavatti, Arehalli, Chikkahullenahalli, Heggere, Harenahalli, Vengalapura, Doddakarpuradakatte, Sulukatte, Bachavara, J.I. Tarikere, Chikkatekalavatti Todukkavalu, Sadarahalli, Kanubenahalli, Kachapura.

Magadi campaign promotes admissions in government schools

MAGADI

Taluk SDMC Committee President Revanna appealed to save and strengthen government schools while speaking at the enrollment awareness campaign launch held in Kalya village of Magadi taluk aimed at increasing admissions in rural government schools.We are making efforts to reach hut residents and working class families in rural areas and motivate parents to enroll children in government schools for their survival and growth and officials are explaining free facilities like quality education by trained teachers computer labs libraries midday hot lunch ragi malt in mornings spacious playgrounds and government scholarships for students.

SDMC leaders said saving government schools is responsibility of everyone and urged parents to treat village school as their own institution and not be attracted to private schools and instead use all free facilities to build bright future for children while focusing on discipline nutrition awareness and community participation.Teachers and SDMC members including Vice President Manjula Member Rajanna and teacher Hanumanthaiyya participated.

Officials asked to strengthen maternal child healthcare system

MANDYA

Officials directed ASHA training, maternal nutrition awareness, and reduced polished rice use, with action plan by June 18 to improve maternal and child health services

Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer K R Nandini has instructed health officials to implement strict precautionary and preventive measures to reduce infant mortality in the district and strengthen maternal and child healthcare services.Speaking at the District Health Association and Infant Death Review Committee meeting held at the Zilla Panchayat mini hall she said that causes of infant deaths must be scientifically studied and a detailed action plan should be prepared to prevent such deaths effectively.She warned that thiamine vitamin B1 deficiency can seriously affect heart nervous system and physical growth of children so early detection is important and ASHA workers must immediately inform parents if symptoms like vomiting poor feeding hoarseness or cough are seen and ensure hospital admission.

Officials said ASHA workers skills must be regularly updated and pregnant women and lactating mothers should be educated on nutritious food during home visits especially avoiding excessive polished rice which increases risk of thiamine deficiency and district officials have been directed to submit a comprehensive action plan by June 18 and conduct awareness IEC activities and special training at taluk level within fifteen days with support of child health experts while District Health Officer Dr Mohan Kumar and MIMS Superintendent Dr Shivakumar along with other officers attended the meeting and stressed coordinated efforts for reducing infant mortality and improving maternal care services across the district.

Authorities emphasized that community participation nutrition awareness timely treatment and strong monitoring systems will help reduce infant deaths and improve overall maternal health outcomes in the district through continuous coordination between health workers and local institutions effectively and consistently.

₹6 crore sanctioned for Kodlipete–Hebbale SH-244 road development in Somwarpet taluk to improve rural connectivity and safety

CENTRE SANCTIONS ₹22 CRORE FOR KODAGU ROADS

MADIKERI

The Central Government has sanctioned ₹22 crore under the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund for major road development works in Kodagu district to strengthen connectivity and improve transport facilities in the region.

Lok Sabha member Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wodeyar announced the approval and thanked Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari and the Government of India for addressing long pending demands for road improvement in Kodagu district.

The sanctioned projects include development of Kodlipete Hebbale Road SH 244 in Somwarpet taluk with ₹6 crore allocation covering selected stretches including Gopalpura Banavar Hebbale route and nearby connecting sections to improve rural connectivity and travel safety for residents and farmers.

Another major project is the Madikeri Kutta Road SH 89 which connects Kushalnagar and Madikeri taluks with ₹10 crore sanctioned for improvement of key chainage sections aimed at easing traffic movement and boosting tourism and local business activities in the district.

The Talakaveri Road SH 90 in Virajpet taluk has also been approved with ₹6 crore for upgrading selected stretches that serve as an important route for pilgrims tourists and local commuters visiting the sacred Talakaveri region.MP Yaduveer Wodeyar said these roads are vital for farmers students tourists and traders and their development will improve road safety transport efficiency and economic growth while supporting Kodagu's tourism potential as a major destination in Karnataka and strengthening overall regional development through better infrastructure access and connectivity across all taluks in the district and ensuring smoother travel experience for public and visitors.

Plastic waste segregation units planned across four taluks

MANDYA

Plastic waste management units in Mandya district will become operational by the end of June under Swachh Bharat Mission Rural Phase 2 guidelines as directed by the Zilla Panchayat CEO during a review meeting with officials.

Units are being set up in Chinakurli Gram Panchayat of Pandavapura taluk Hulikere Gram Panchayat of Nagamangala taluk Chaudenahalli Gram Panchayat of K R Pete taluk and Mahadevapura Gram Panchayat of Srirangapatna taluk at a cost of sixteen lakh rupees each and collected plastic waste from Swachh Sankirtan units will be transported to taluk level facilities for processing under Waste to Wealth concept women self help groups will be given machinery to sort and bale plastic waste into categories so it can be sold to cement factories.The CEO directed CHESCO engineers to ensure electricity supply to all units and instructed officials to start operations of all four plastic waste management units by the end of June.

Yoga promotes healthy aging and mental well-being: Dr Chandrakant

CHITRADURGA

Yoga is more relevant than ever today for maintaining physical and mental health in a fast changing lifestyle said District AYUSH Officer Dr Chandrakant Nagasamudra highlighting the importance of yoga for stress free living and healthy aging.

India proposed International Yoga Day at the United Nations in 2014 and since 2015 it has been observed worldwide on June 21 which is chosen for its long daylight and scientific importance and this year the theme is Yoga for Healthy Aging.

A 45 minute Common Yoga Protocol session will be held in Chitradurga on June 21 from 7 am to 7 45 am at the old secondary school premises with preparations including coordination meetings with government and non government groups and awareness programmes.

The AYUSH department is also running free Nitya Yoga online sessions every day from 5 30 am to 6 30 am combining 45 minutes of yoga practice and 15 minutes of medical advice from doctors. Ten AYUSH clinics in the district have been upgraded to Ayushman Arogya Mandir with trained yoga instructors providing free guidance. Yoga helps reduce stress improves lifestyle diseases and supports healthy aging by improving physical and mental balance in daily life.

For a healthy and happy life everyone should include yoga meditation and pranayama in their daily routine.

Bidar South celebrates twelve years of Modi leadership

BIDAR

Bidar South leaders celebrated twelve years of successful leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling it a proud moment in India's political history. Dr Shailendra Beldale said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's twelve years in office show strong vision and development focus for the country. He said major changes happened in infrastructure, economy, digital services, national security, women empowerment and farmer welfare during this period.

Party workers and public members gathered at Shri Shiva temple in Manna Ekhelli village to offer special prayers, perform rituals and seek blessings for peace and progress of the nation. A cleanliness drive was also conducted in the temple area to promote hygiene and environmental awareness among the people. Special prayers were offered for unity, prosperity and welfare of India, wishing good health and long life for Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Leaders expressed hope that India will continue to grow under Modi's leadership and reach greater global recognition. Participants highlighted the slogan Service is determination Nation first and said it guides development work across the country. The event saw participation from BJP leaders, workers, office bearers and supporters who joined the temple activities and community service efforts.

The gathering reflected unity and commitment towards national development and dedication to public service in line with government goals. Prayers were also made seeking strength, good health and long service for the Prime Minister to continue leading India forward.

According to MLA Dr Shailendra Beldale, such events strengthen public spirit and highlight the achievements of the central leadership in nation building efforts. The special puja at Shri Shiva temple included chanting, floral offerings and traditional rituals carried out peacefully by devotees.Overall the programme in Bidar South constituency was marked by devotion unity and celebration of twelve years of leadership under Prime Minister Narendra Modi with participants expressing confidence in continued progress of the nation under his guidance. The gathering also emphasized service oriented governance and future development goals for a stronger India.

CHEMICAL-REDUCTION-CAMPAIGN

Khet Bachao Abhiyan promotes balanced fertilizer use

GADAG

Under the Khet Bachao Abhiyan, a campaign on balanced fertilizer use and seed treatment was held in Budishwar Hosalli and Shayagoti villages of Gadag taluk, organized jointly by the Agriculture Department and Krishi Vigyan Kendra Hulakoti.

The main objective of the programme was to promote sustainable agriculture, protect soil health, reduce excessive chemical fertilizer use and increase farmers income through better farming practices and awareness activities in rural areas.

Joint Director of Agriculture Chetana Patil, Deputy Director Spurthi G S, scientists from Krishi Vigyan Kendra Hulakoti, and progressive farmers participated in the programme along with Agriculture Department staff and Farmer Contact Centre representatives.

Scientists explained importance of soil testing, balanced fertilizer use, organic farming methods, water conservation and integrated pest management and also guided farmers on seed treatment techniques.

Farmers from Budishwar Hosalli, Kurtakoti, Shagoti, Dundoor and Chikkahandigol villages actively participated and appreciated the programme for helping improve productivity and promoting sustainable and organic farming practices in the region.

Agriculture officials also informed farmers about various government subsidy schemes, soil health card usage, modern agricultural machinery and drip irrigation methods.

They encouraged farmers to adopt scientific farming practices to reduce cost of cultivation and increase income. Officials said continuous training and awareness programmes will be conducted in nearby villages to strengthen farmer knowledge and improve sustainable agriculture practices.

QUICK READ

Bike rider dies in Napoklu car collision

Napoklu

A 75-year-old bike rider died on the spot after a car hit his motorcycle from behind near Chonakere Emballi in Napoklu, Kodagu district. The victim, identified as Cheeka Poovanda E. Bopanna, was travelling from Nelyaji towards Napoklu when the accident occurred on Tuesday afternoon. The car, which was also heading towards Napoklu from Emmemadu, reportedly struck the bike from behind, causing the rider to fall and suffer fatal injuries. Napoklu police visited the spot, registered a case and shifted the body to Madikeri for post-mortem examination. Further investigation into the accident is underway.

Disabled persons National Award applications invited

Mangaluru

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, has invited applications for the 2026–27 National Awards for Persons with Disabilities. The awards will be presented on December 3 during World Disability Day celebrations. Individuals and organisations working in empowerment, rehabilitation, education, skill development, employment generation, accessibility, research, innovation, sports, arts and literature are eligible to apply. Applicants can collect forms from the District Panchayat office in Mangaluru and submit them after filling in English. The last date for submission is July 25, according to the District Disability Welfare Officer's office.

Congress protests fuel price hike in Kolar

MLC Anil Kumar criticised PM Modi over fuel price hikes and LPG subsidy cuts, saying Congress will intensify protests

KOLAR

The District Congress Committee staged a large protest against rising LPG petrol and diesel prices by the Central Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Kolar.

Congress leaders and workers assembled in front of the district office carrying LPG cylinders and placards criticising government policies and marched through city streets on a bullock cart raising slogans against fuel price hike before reaching Mekke Circle and forming a human chain to express protest against inflation pressures.

Addressing the gathering MLC M L Anil Kumar said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had failed to fulfil promises and fuel price hikes were increasing burden on common people across the country. He said subsidies on LPG were reduced and household expenses had gone up significantly affecting families and poor sections of society. He warned that Congress would intensify agitation if prices were not reduced further.He compared earlier UPA era fuel prices with current rates saying LPG cylinders had risen to nearly one thousand rupees while petrol and diesel had also become costly for citizens. He also criticised demonetisation changes in employment schemes and delays in women reservation implementation and accused government of failing to control inflation. Party leaders and workers from different parts of Kolar district participated in the demonstration showing strong opposition to fuel price hike and rising cost of living issues affecting households across region.

The protest highlighted growing public anger over inflation and fuel prices with Congress leaders reiterating their demand for immediate price reduction and warning of continued agitation in future if government fails to act promptly.

Srinivas University Bags Three Global Awards at Bangkok Education Summit

MANGALURU

Mangaluru-based institution receives top honours for excellence in higher education, industry-integrated learning, and visionary leadership on the international stage

Srinivas University has achieved a significant international milestone by winning three prestigious awards at the Global Education Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand.

Chancellor Dr. Srinivas Rao made the announcement during a press conference in Mangaluru on Wednesday. The university was conferred the Global Excellence Award in Higher Education and Research, while its Srinivas Institute of Technology (SIT) received the Excellence in Industry Integrated Technical Education Award. Additionally, Dr. Shrinivasa Mayya D., Principal of SIT, was honoured with the Visionary Education Leader Award.

Dr. Srinivas Rao credited the late educationist Dr. C.A. Raghavendra Rao's vision for the growth of Srinivas institutions, which have emerged as a leading group in quality education, research, skill development, and industry-oriented learning.

The university maintains strong academic partnerships with global giants such as TCS, Microsoft, IBM, Google, Intel, and UiPath.

It has also pioneered a four-year B.Tech programme in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering. The university has to its credit 593 copyrights, 28 patents, over 157 patent publications, more than 2,000 international research papers, and research grants exceeding ₹115 crore.

Representatives including Dr. Shrinivasa Mayya D. and Dr. Dheeraj Hebri attended the summit and held discussions with leading Thai universities on student-faculty exchange programmes, joint research, global internships, and employment opportunities.

The chancellor emphasised that these awards strengthen the institution's commitment to providing global education, exposure, and career prospects to local students.

Rains encourage onion sowing among farmers

CHIKKAMAGALURU

A spell of timely rainfall across Biraur hobli has brought relief and renewed enthusiasm among farmers, prompting many to begin onion sowing operations in prepared fields while others continue land preparation work.

Farmers in the region said the recent "hadda male" (gentle, steady rain) has created ideal soil conditions for cultivation. As a result, those who had already completed pre-sowing preparations have started onion seed sowing, while others are busy ploughing and cleaning their fields.

Agriculture remains a key livelihood in Biraur, where crops such as ragi, sunflower, maize, groundnut, potato and onion are grown alongside the dominant commercial crop, arecanut.

With favourable moisture levels in the soil, farmers have returned to their fields in large numbers.

Traditionally, farmers here would complete deep ploughing before waiting for monsoon showers to begin sowing.

This year, timely rainfall has ensured that the soil has reached the required "hadda" stage, creating optimism among onion growers.

537 students will take exams in Karwar district, with officials ensuring seating, water, and sanitation facilities in advance

Strict guidelines issued for NEET re-exam conduct

KARWAR

The NEET re-examination scheduled for June 21 at Government Arts and Science Degree College in Karwar must be conducted in a transparent and orderly manner as per official guidelines, said Deputy Commissioner K Lakshmi Priya while reviewing preparations with examination officials.

She chaired a meeting at the District Collector's office and instructed all officers assigned for exam duty to strictly follow rules and ensure smooth conduct of the national level medical entrance test across the centre in the district.

A total of 537 students will appear for the examination in Karwar district and officials have been directed to verify infrastructure facilities in advance including proper seating arrangements drinking water and sanitation facilities to avoid inconvenience to candidates on exam day.

The Deputy Commissioner asked HESCOM officials to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the examination while transport department authorities were instructed to arrange adequate buses so that students can reach centres on time without difficulty or delay.

She also directed departments to take precautions considering possible rainfall and ensure safety arrangements are in place while police have been asked to provide security for movement of question papers answer sheets and examination centres to prevent any irregularities or security risks during the process.

Health department staff will also be deployed at examination centres as a precautionary measure and all departments have been instructed to coordinate

closely to ensure smooth and fair conduct of the exam without any lapses in duty or administrative failure during the examination period in the district.

Groww grants scholarships to 200 NITK students

MANGALURU

Financial services platform Groww has awarded scholarships to 200 undergraduate engineering students of National Institute of Technology Karnataka (NITK), Surathkal for the financial year 2025–26, according to the institute.

The scholarship programme aims to support students from economically weaker backgrounds pursuing B.Tech courses across various disciplines, helping them meet educational and living expenses during their academic journey.

As part of the initiative, 190 students have been selected under the WellBeing Scholarship category, which provides ₹70,000 annually to each beneficiary.

The support is intended to assist with living expenses. The recipients include 158 male and 32 female students.

In addition, 10 female students have been awarded the FullRide Scholarship, which offers ₹2.5 lakh per annum, covering both tuition fees and living costs.

The institute noted that this category is specifically designed to encourage greater participation of women in engineering and technical education.

Selection for the scholarships was based on academic merit and family income criteria. For the WellBeing Scholarship, students were required to maintain a minimum CGPA of 6.0 and have an annual family income below ₹1 lakh.

For the FullRide category, the eligibility included a minimum CGPA of 6.5 and a family income between ₹1 lakh and ₹8 lakh.

Candidates were also required to maintain at least 75 per cent attendance, along with verification of academic records, income certificates and other supporting documents before final approval.NITK Surathkal said the initiative is part of its broader industry engagement programme, under which corporate organisations collaborate with the institute to support student welfare alongside academic and research development.Officials said such partnerships help reduce financial burden on students while promoting inclusive access to higher technical education.

C.N. Road widening begins demolition of buildings along stretch

BHADRAVATI

Road widening works on the C.N. Road in Bhadravati have officially gained momentum with the commencement of building demolition along the identified stretch. The project is being executed jointly by the Public Works Department and the City Municipal Council as part of a broader urban infrastructure upgrade aimed at easing traffic congestion and improving connectivity within the town.

The 1.30-kilometre stretch from Madhavachar Circle to Rangappa Circle up to the front of the APMC yard has been taken up for expansion. The state government has sanctioned ₹9.50 crore for the project, which involves widening the road to 80 feet in total width, with 40 feet on either side from the central alignment. As part of the plan, around 165 structures—both partially and fully—are being marked for removal.

Authorities had set a deadline for property owners to complete voluntary demolition by May 31. However, several shopkeepers and building owners requested additional time, citing the upcoming monsoon season and the difficulty of reconstructing or relocating their businesses immediately. Despite these requests, officials maintained that delays would only escalate project costs and further prolong traffic issues in the busy commercial corridor.

In response, many property owners have now begun dismantling portions of their buildings voluntarily to avoid full-scale demolition by authorities. While some have completely razed their structures, others have opted for partial demolition up to the marked boundary line, allowing limited continuation of business operations from the remaining portion.

Due to the scale of the project, several traders have temporarily shifted their shops to nearby localities including B.H. Road, Hosamane Road, Puneeth Rajkumar Road, and Akkasaligara Beedi.

Officials stated that timely completion of demolition work is crucial to ensure smooth progress of the widening project, especially before heavy monsoon rains begin, which could otherwise delay construction activities and increase overall expenditure.

One-day organic farming training at Rangapur

Chitradurga

A one-day special training workshop on organic farming will be held on June 14 at 9.30 am at Rishi Sanskoti Vidya Kendra in Rangapur, Ramgiri Hobli of Holalkere taluk. The programme is organised under the National Agricultural Development Scheme by the Agriculture Department in collaboration with the District Agricultural Training Centre, Babbur Farm, Aikantika Community Davangere and Rishi Gurukul institutions.Experts and progressive farmers will guide participants on topics such as the history of agriculture, introduction to organic farming, soil health, water management and methods to increase groundwater through natural farming practices.

Jaya Karnataka leader donates gate to school garden

KODAGU

Jay Karnataka Sanghatane Taluk Unit President C.B. Suresh Shetty handed over a newly constructed gate for a school kitchen garden at Aigoor High School, highlighting the importance of organic cultivation and student well-being.

The event was held under the joint initiative of the school's Bhavanakkondu Sadan Eco Club, which has been promoting awareness on sustainable agriculture and healthy food habits among students. The newly developed kitchen garden within the school campus was also showcased during the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, Suresh Shetty said that consuming home-grown vegetables helps improve health and reduces dependency on chemically treated and pesticide-laden produce available in the market. He encouraged students to take up gardening activities and understand the value of natural food sources.

He further stated that students should not discontinue their education due to financial difficulties and assured that support would be extended to those facing challenges in paying fees or purchasing learning materials. His remarks were well received by teachers and students present at the event.

The gate donation was made as part of efforts to improve infrastructure for the school's kitchen garden, which is intended to serve both educational and practical purposes.

DOG CATCHING OPERATION SPARKS PUBLIC CONTROVERSY

TIRTHAHALLI

A stray dog capture drive undertaken by the Tirthahalli Town Panchayat has triggered strong public debate and controversy in the town over the past few days. The operation, aimed at controlling the increasing stray dog population, has drawn criticism from animal welfare groups and local residents over alleged violations in handling and treatment of the animals.

According to officials, the captured dogs are being taken to a designated waste management facility where they are temporarily kept in enclosures. The town panchayat has also carried out Animal Birth Control (ABC) procedures, including sterilisation surgeries, on a number of stray dogs before releasing them back into their original areas. Authorities said that so far 48 dogs have been treated under the programme and subsequently released.

However, the operation has come under severe scrutiny after residents alleged inhumane treatment during the capture process. Citizens have claimed that dogs are being handled roughly.

COMMUNITY-PLANTATION-EVENT

Officials, residents unite to expand urban greenery

MANGALURU

Officials from the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board's Mangaluru regional office led a vibrant community effort to plant numerous saplings across Kadri Hill. Participants included board staff, enthusiastic local residents, students, and representatives from the VANA Charitable Trust, all working together under the morning sun to nurture new growth in the urban landscape.

The event took place near the Karnataka Polytechnic College, where banners highlighted the collective commitment to sustainability. Volunteers carefully positioned each sapling in prepared soil beds, ensuring proper spacing and support for long-term survival.

This drive forms part of broader efforts to enhance green cover in the coastal city.

Partnerships with organizations like VANA Charitable Trust will provide ongoing technical support and additional resources.

The gathering showcased strong public-private collaboration, with many participants pledging continued involvement in environmental conservation.

Such hands-on actions demonstrate how collective small steps contribute to larger ecological benefits, fostering a greener and healthier Mangaluru for years ahead.

QUICK READ

Trouble in paradise for INDIA bloc amid internal bickering

NEW DELHI

The opposition INDIA bloc is facing serious trouble as internal conflicts begin to surface. Senior Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan admitted that cracks have appeared within the alliance. The division became clear after Tamil Nadu's DMK skipped a key opposition meeting following disagreements with Congress. Meanwhile, other regional partners like the Left and JMM are also clashing with Congress over local election issues. Chavan confessed that the opposition is struggling to meet public expectations despite widespread voter frustration. He warned that internal splits, similar to recent party breakups in Maharashtra, are now threatening their unity.

Massive fire guts Kolkata government building

KOLKATA

A major fire erupted at the multi-storey South 24 Parganas Zilla Parishad building in Alipore. Thick black smoke filled the sky around 10 a.m. as the blaze, suspected to be caused by an air conditioner short circuit, rapidly spread from the fourth floor to the upper levels. Firefighters heroically rescued two people, while another escaped using a rope. Ten fire engines rushed to the scene, facing difficulties due to narrow spaces and trees. While a portion of the roof collapsed, officials confirmed no casualties have been reported so far.

CRPF tightens security in Kashmir ahead of Amarnath Yatra

NEW DELHI

CRPF has increased security operations in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of the Amarnath Yatra 2026, which begins on July 3 and continues for 57 days till August 28. Officials said forces are carrying out counter-terror operations in high mountain ridges and strict surveillance in the plains to ensure a safe pilgrimage. CRPF Director General GP Singh reviewed preparations during a visit to Srinagar and held meetings with senior officers. The focus is to strengthen the security grid and coordination. Both Pahalgam and Baltal routes have been declared no-flying zones from July 1.

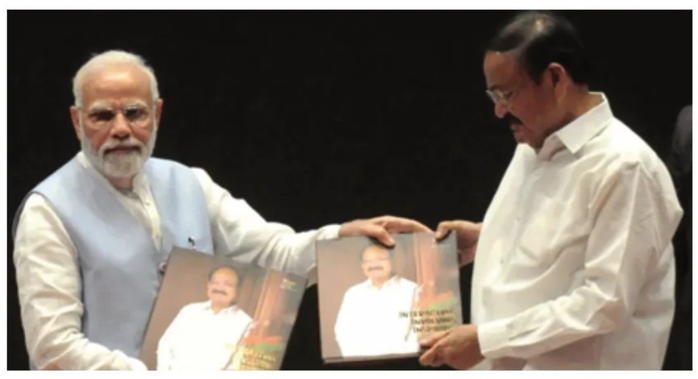
Venkaiah Naidu crowns Modi 'Man of Destiny'

The former Vice President He lauded Modi's leadership, praising governance achievements, reforms, and India's strengthened global position and security.

AMARAVATI

Former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi, declaring that India's future is completely safe and secure under his leadership.

Naidu celebrated Modi becoming India's longest-continuous serving PM, reaching 4,399 days in office and surpassing Jawaharlal Nehru's historic record. Decades ago, Naidu famously stated that the acronym MODI stood for "Making of Developed India."Now, he proudly upgraded that title, calling the Prime Minister the "Man of Destiny for India" who is guiding the nation toward a golden era.



Naidu highlighted Modi's extraordinary journey from a humble tea vendor in Gujarat to the nation's highest office. He credited Modi's early days with the RSS for shaping his strong organizational skills, clear vision, and deep connection with ordinary citizens.

According to Naidu, Modi's governance succeeded by turning national policies into public movements. He pointed to massive achievements, including building 12 crore household toilets, constructing 4 crore homes for the underprivileged, and making India a global leader in digital payments. Furthermore, major reforms like the abolition of triple talaq, the removal of Article 370, and introducing a 33% reservation for women in parliament showcase a leader who rejects politics of appeasement.

Concluding his tribute, the former Vice President emphasized that India's national security has significantly strengthened, effectively tackling internal extremism and external threats. Naidu stated that under Modi, India's independent foreign policy ensures its voice matters deeply on the global stage.

NCW pushes reform plan for women prisoners

NEW DELHI

NCW proposes major prison reforms, focusing on healthcare, rehabilitation, and gender-sensitive policies for women, children, and transgender inmates, plus creation of a Prison Commission.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) has proposed major reforms to India's prison system to improve healthcare, safety and rehabilitation for women inmates, pregnant prisoners, children living in jails and transgender detainees.

In its Law Review 2025–26 report submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the Commission has recommended the creation of a separate National Commission for Prisons to oversee prison administration and protect inmate rights.

The NCW, led by Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar, said the prison system should become more humane and gender-sensitive, with changes across laws and prison manuals, including reforms in the Prisons Act and related legal frameworks. One of the key proposals focuses on healthcare, including permanent appointment of doctors, psychiatrists and gynaecologists in prisons. The report also calls for regular screening of women inmates for serious illnesses such as cancer, HIV, hepatitis and anaemia.

It further recommends stronger mental health support, trauma care, counselling services and post-release rehabilitation programmes to help inmates reintegrate into society. For pregnant women prisoners, the NCW has suggested better prenatal and postnatal care, institutional deliveries in external hospitals, and improved documentation rules for children born in custody. It also proposes extending maternity benefits and increasing the age limit for children staying with incarcerated mothers.

The report stresses maintaining family connections through better visitation facilities and video conferencing systems, along with vocational training and skill development for inmates. Special protections have also been suggested for transgender prisoners, including privacy during searches, separate accommodation and non-discriminatory healthcare.

On legal reforms, the NCW has recommended easier bail provisions for undertrial women in minor offences and greater consideration for pregnant women and mothers with dependent kids. The Commission has also suggested increasing women's representation in prison staff and introducing stronger oversight mechanisms to ensure accountability and humane treatment inside correctional facilities.

Jharkhand statehood activists clashed with police during a protest march demanding rights, pensions, and recognition amid ongoing hunger strike.

Barricades halt Jharkhand activists' Morabadi ground march

RANCHI

Tensions flared in the capital as hundreds of activists who fought for Jharkhand's statehood were blocked by police during a massive protest march toward the Chief Minister's house.

Marching from Morabadi Ground with traditional drums and music, the protesters demanded long-overdue rights. However, security forces stopped them with barricades near Sido-Kanhu Park. This led to heated arguments and a sit-in protest on the road.

Under the Jharkhand Andolankari Sangharsh Morcha banner, activists expressed deep anger over being ignored for twenty-five years. Led by Pushkar Mahto, the group is demanding official identity cards, fair pensions, compensation, and government jobs for their families. They claimed many comrades sacrificed their lives for this state, yet survivors are living in poverty.

The situation intensified when seventeen protesters started an indefinite hunger strike on the street. Activists also alleged that police detained several supporters traveling from other districts to join the rally. The local administration has not yet commented on these claims. Protest leaders stated they are not begging for charity but demanding the respect they earned. They reminded the government that Jharkhand was built on their sweat and blood, not just drawn on a map. Activists warned that if the government does not act immediately, they will launch a much larger state-wide agitation.

Tejashwi raises alarm over Bihar's finances

PATNA

Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav raised serious concerns over Bihar's financial condition, alleging that the state is facing a "financial emergency" after the government approved withdrawal of Rs 3,662 crore from the Bihar Contingency Fund to pay social security pensions.

Yadav said the Contingency Fund is meant for emergencies such as natural disasters or unexpected crises, and its use for routine payments signals a deep financial problem. He questioned whether Bihar was moving towards bankruptcy and blamed the state's governance model for the situation.

According to reports, he claimed that the government had been forced to use emergency funds to clear pensions for May, June, and July 2026. He said this showed the severity of the fiscal stress in the state.

The RJD leader further alleged that salaries of government employees have remained unpaid for several months and that payments to contractors have been pending for nearly a year. He also claimed that several welfare schemes have slowed down or stopped due to lack of funds.

Yadav pointed out that even projects approved in 2023–24 had not started properly, while new announcements were also facing delays. He added that issues like power cuts, stalled scholarships, and the halted Student Credit Card Scheme were affecting people across Bihar. He also demanded an explanation from CM Samrat Choudhary over the financial decisions.

CM Vijay in Delhi for NITI Aayog meeting

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay arrived in New Delhi for a high-profile three-day visit.

He is in the national capital to attend the NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting, which will be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This marks Vijay's second official trip to Delhi since taking office last month. A team of close aides and top state officials accompanied the Chief Minister. The crucial meeting will bring together national leaders, state chief ministers, and lieutenant governors to discuss vital economic issues, central-state coordination, and infrastructure development.

Sources state that Vijay will present Tamil Nadu's core development priorities and financial concerns before the council. His freshly elected government is actively seeking increased financial backing from the central government for several welfare programs and infrastructure projects.

Beyond official policy discussions, political circles are closely watching Vijay's schedule for potential high-level political meetings. The Chief Minister is expected to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah and hold key discussions with senior Congress leaders during his stay.

During his first Delhi visit in late May, Vijay met PM Modi and submitted a detailed memorandum regarding inter-state river disputes and the safety of Tamil Nadu fishermen. After concluding his official engagements at the NITI Aayog forum, Vijay plans to take a short personal trip to Mangaluru in neighboring Karnataka on Friday morning. He is scheduled to fly back to Chennai by Friday evening, concluding his busy three-day tour.

Govt defends Ujjwala subsidy refill reduction decision

NEW DELHI

The Central Government defended its decision to reduce the number of subsidised LPG cylinder refills available under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), saying the move was necessary to prevent misuse of the welfare scheme.

Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said the number of subsidised refills was cut from nine to four annually after authorities found that several beneficiaries were not using all the cylinders for household cooking purposes.

Speaking during an interaction with the media, the minister explained that the government reviewed usage patterns and received reports indicating that some beneficiaries were diverting subsidised cylinders for commercial use or selling them to others for profit.

Puri said there was little reason to provide additional subsidised cylinders to households that did not require them. According to him, the decision was based on practical needs and aimed at ensuring that government support reached genuine users.

PMUY was launched to provide clean cooking fuel to economically weaker families across the country. The scheme has helped millions of households shift from traditional cooking methods to LPG, improving health and living conditions. The minister stressed that the government remains committed to supporting deserving beneficiaries while ensuring public resources are used responsibly and effectively.

BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION
Office of Assistant Conservator of Forest, Palike Soudha,
Govindarajanagara, M.C. Layout, Bengaluru - 560040.

No:ACF/BWCC/TENDER/PR/02/2026-27 Date:08.06.2026

SHORT TIME TENDER NOTIFICATION (Call-2)

(Only Through **Karnataka Public Procurement Portal**)

The Assistant Conservator of Forests, BWCC, Bengaluru on behalf of the Commissioner, BWCC invites Service Call-2 Tender Two Cover Systems from Contractors registered in CPWD/KPWD/FOREST/Railways/MES/National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the Service detailed in the table below.

Following are the Services and Events of Bid Process:

Sl No.	Indent	Name of Works	Estimate Amount	EMD Rs	Period of Service
1.	BWCC/2026-27 /SE0085/CALL-2	Dasarahalli Assembly Constituency Tree Canopy Management During the Year 2026-27, 365 Days day Team.	4250000.00	85000.00	31-03-2027
2.	BWCC/2026-27 /SE0088/CALL-2	R.R. Nagara Assembly Constituency Rapid Response Team.	2125000.00	50000.00	31-10-2026

Calendar of Events: (1) Date of Commencement of Download of RFP Document from KPPP Website **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** From **11.06.2026.** (2) Last Date and Time for Uploading Online Queries in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **15.06.2026** upto **5:00** pm. (3) Last Date and Time for Uploading of RFP in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **20.06.2026** upto **5:00** pm. (4) Date and Time of Online Opening of RFP Applications in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **22.06.2026**, **5:10** pm. (5) Date and Time of Online Financial Opening of Tender: When approval of Technical Bid. (6) Place of Opening of RFP: Online at Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. (7) Address for Communication: Office of Assistant Conservator of Forest, Palike Soudha, Govindarajanagara, M.C. Layout, Bengaluru-560040. Email id:acfbbmpsouth@yahoo.co.in, Contact:7019464699.

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests,
Bengaluru West City Corporation

Sivankutty protests Joy's T'puram party appointment

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A fierce internal battle has exploded within Kerala's ruling CPI-M party. Senior leader and former minister V. Sivankutty openly rebelled against the party's top leadership over a powerful local position.

He skipped a crucial district meeting recently to protest the reappointment of V. Joy as the Thiruvananthapuram district Secretary. The top leadership, including CM Vijayan, recently decided that Joy, who is already a lawmaker, would keep the influential post. Joy had briefly stepped aside to run in the assembly elections. As per party rules, lawmakers usually do not hold district secretary positions. However, top leaders made an exception for Joy. This decision deeply frustrated Sivankutty, who recently lost both his assembly seat and his ministerial post in the elections.

METRO PHASE 2A

₹2,169 cr Ahmedabad Metro plan gets nod

NEW DELHI

In a major boost to urban transport, the Union Cabinet approved Phase 2A of the Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project at a cost of Rs 2,169.04 crore.

The project is expected to improve connectivity, reduce traffic congestion, and make travel easier for thousands of commuters. Chaired by PM Narendra Modi, the Cabinet cleared the construction of a new 6.032-kilometre metro corridor with five stations.

Four stations will be elevated, while one station will be built underground. The stations planned under the new route are Ashram Road, Koteshwar

Prachin Mandir, Sabarmati River, Sardar Nagar, and Airport.

Once completed, the Ahmedabad-Gandhinagar metro network will expand to 77.63 kilometres. The new corridor will provide direct access to the airport and connect important residential and commercial areas that currently lack efficient public transport facilities. Officials said the project could also support future sports infrastructure planned around upcoming international events such as the World Police Games 2029 and the Commonwealth Games 2030.

The metro extension is expected to bring several benefits, including shorter travel times, smoother traffic flow, and improved road safety. Authorities believe the project will encourage more people to use public transport, leading to lower carbon emissions and a cleaner environment. The enhanced connectivity is also expected to boost local businesses and attract investment to developing areas. During peak construction activity, around 2,000 jobs will be created, while nearly 500 people are expected to be employed in operating and maintaining the metro system after completion.

QUICK READ

Udhampur forest fire spread amid heatwave

UDHAMPUR

A severe heatwave in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district has triggered multiple forest fires, with fresh flames reported in the Rang forest area of Ramnagar. Officials said the region has recorded 21 fire incidents since May 22, ranging from small to major outbreaks. Forest teams are working round the clock, with 11 control rooms set up across different locations. Authorities said strong winds and dry conditions are making it difficult to control the fires, and sparks can easily reignite burnt areas. Officials have urged people to avoid lighting fires near forests as efforts continue to protect wildlife and forest cover.

Nagpur bomb threat sparks security sweep

NAGPUR

Police in Nagpur carried out a detailed search after a bomb threat email warned of possible blasts at key locations, including the RSS headquarters. Officials said security teams checked the RSS headquarters, Hedgewar Bhawan, and Harihar areas as a precaution. Deputy Commissioner of Police Rahul Madne said the email triggered immediate action and thorough inspections. No suspicious objects were found, and the sites were later declared safe. Authorities confirmed the operation was completed after full checks. Police said the threat was taken seriously due to recent incidents in Maharashtra, and security has been tightened while investigations into the email continue.

Bihar CM releases Rs 1,100 cr pension aid

The amount was released via DBT system to 94 lakh beneficiaries, ensuring timely social security support.

PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary transferred Rs 1,100 crore directly into the bank accounts of more than 94 lakh beneficiaries under various social security pension schemes through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system.

The transfer was carried out from Bihar Bhawan in New Delhi and is part of the state government's effort to ensure timely financial support to vulnerable sections of society.

Officials said beneficiaries under multiple pension schemes received Rs 1,100 per month directly in their accounts. The government has announced that pension payments will now be credited regularly on the 10th of every month. The Chief Minister

urged eligible senior citizens who have not yet enrolled in the scheme to apply so they can receive benefits. He said the government remains committed to supporting the elderly, widows, and persons with disabilities. Bihar currently operates six major social security pension schemes, including old age pensions, widow pensions, disability pensions, and other welfare programmes aimed at supporting economically weaker groups.

The state government had earlier increased the pension amount from Rs 400 to Rs 1,100 per month, a move announced ahead of the 2025 Assembly elections.

Officials said recent delays in payments had caused concern among beneficiaries, but steps have now been taken to ensure regular and timely transfers.

Earlier this week, the government approved an advance allocation of Rs 3,662 crore for pension payments covering several months. The latest transfer specifically covers payments for the month of May. According to official data, Bihar has around 1.19 crore pension beneficiaries, with more than 94 lakh receiving payments in the latest disbursement through the DBT system.

Centre to push coal gasification in Hyderabad

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Coal will hold a roadshow in Hyderabad to promote coal and lignite gasification projects, as part of its efforts to boost investment and expand cleaner utilisation of domestic coal resources.

Officials said the event follows a successful earlier roadshow in Delhi that saw strong participation from industry stakeholders, reflecting growing interest in India's coal gasification sector.

Union Coal and Mines Minister G Kishan Reddy will attend the event as chief guest, while Minister of State Satish Chandra Dubey will participate as guest of honour. Senior officials from the Coal Ministry, state governments, public sector companies, investors and industry representatives are also expected to attend.

The event will focus on investment, policy frameworks, new technologies and project execution strategies in the sector. It will also provide a platform for dialogue between policymakers, industry leaders and technology providers.

The ministry said coal gasification is a key technology that converts coal into synthesis gas, which can be used to produce chemicals, synthetic fuels, methanol, ammonia-based products and other industrial materials. Officials added that the government is promoting coal gasification through policy support and incentives, aiming to strengthen energy security, reduce import dependence and improve value addition from domestic coal reserves.

Coal Ministry roadshow in Hyderabad promotes coal gasification projects, aiming to attract investment and boost cleaner, efficient use of domestic coal resources.

Authorities believe the initiative will help speed up development of coal gasification projects across the country and encourage greater private sector participation. The government said the event is part of a broader strategy to modernise India's coal sector while ensuring more efficient and diversified use of energy resources.

Dhami clears Rs 89 cr projects in Uttarakhand

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has approved development and infrastructure projects worth around Rs 89 crore across the state, covering police housing, disaster relief support and public facilities.

The approved funds include Rs 42.47 crore for constructing 120 Type-II residential quarters at the Police Line in Roshanabad, Haridwar. Another Rs 17.44 crore has been sanctioned for demolishing unsafe buildings at the Rishikesh police station and building new residential quarters for police personnel.

Officials said Rs 59.78 lakh has also been approved for constructing new barracks at the district jail in Dehradun. In addition, Rs 27.60 crore has been cleared for various police infrastructure works during the current financial year. The Chief Minister has also approved financial assistance for families affected by natural disasters in Uttarkashi district.

These families will receive monthly rental support of Rs 4,000 for six months under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. In another decision, Rs 29.32 lakh has been sanctioned for installing 10 high-mast lights in market areas under the Salt Assembly constituency in Almora district to improve public lighting and safety.

The case relates to claims that Rahul referred to Lord Ram as a "fictional" or "mythological" figure during an event at Brown University

Remarks on Lord Ram: Varanasi court revives plea against RaGa

NEW DELHI

A special MP/MLA court in Varanasi has allowed a fresh complaint seeking criminal action against Congress leader and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi over alleged remarks made about Lord Ram during an event in the United States.

The case relates to claims that Rahul Gandhi referred to Lord Ram as a "fictional" or "mythological" figure during an interaction at Brown University in Boston in April 2025.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Yajuvendra Vikram Singh overturned an earlier order of a lower court that had rejected the complaint at the initial stage. The court said the Magistrate had dismissed the matter without giving the complainant a proper hearing.

The revisional court has now sent the case back for fresh consideration, instructing that it be examined again according to legal procedure under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita. The earlier order by the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate had stated that the complaint could not proceed without prior approval from the Lok Sabha Speaker, as Rahul Gandhi is a sitting Member of Parliament.

However, the HC observed that the plaint required proper judicial review and should not have been rejected without full examination. The complainant, advocate Harishankar Pandey, alleged that the remarks hurt religious sentiments and could fall under provisions of the BNS related to promoting disharmony and offending beliefs. He has also argued that the Congress should be included in the case. The Magistrate court will now re-examine the complaint and decide the next course of action as per law.

Indian Navy gets ₹449 cr GNSS jammer deal

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Defence has signed a Rs 449 crore contract for the procurement of 20 Enhanced Capability Global Navigation Satellite System (ECGNSS) jammers for the Indian Navy, marking a fresh push towards strengthening indigenous defence technology.

The agreement was signed with Bengaluru-based Accord Software and Systems Private Limited under the Buy (Indian-Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured) category.

The deal was finalised in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh.

Officials said the systems will help the Navy disrupt and mislead enemy satellite navigation signals by degrading signal tracking and enabling spoofing or deceptive jamming techniques.

This capability is expected to improve operational safety for Indian naval ships operating in complex and high-risk environments.

The project requires at least 75 per cent indigenous content, reflecting the government's continued focus on Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India in the defence sector.

According to the Ministry of Defence, the induction of these systems will strengthen India's maritime security framework and enhance the Navy's ability to operate effectively in multi-threat scenarios.

Officials added that the contract is part of a broader effort to modernise defence infrastructure and reduce dependence on imported military systems by promoting domestic innovation and production.

The move is seen as a significant step in boosting India's electronic warfare capabilities at sea while also supporting local defence manufacturing companies.

The Ministry said the initiative will contribute to long-term self-reliance in advanced military technologies and improve preparedness against evolving security challenges in the maritime domain.

JK forms panel to probe Gondola glitch

SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir government has set up a five-member committee to investigate the technical failure of the Gulmarg Gondola that left more than 300 tourists stranded mid-air for several hours on May 25, as per official statement. The committee will be headed by Mahmood Ahmad Shah of the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service, who is also Managing Director of Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited.

Other members include senior officials from the tourism and engineering departments, including the Director of Tourism Jammu, the Chief Executive Officer of Gulmarg Development Authority, and mechanical engineering experts from the Kashmir region.

According to the government order, the panel has been tasked with conducting a detailed inquiry into the sequence of events that led to the malfunction. It will also examine all mechanical, electrical, electronic, braking and safety systems of the ropeway.

Officials said the committee will review existing standard operating procedures and maintenance practices to determine whether any negligence, operational lapse or administrative failure contributed to the incident.

SUNDARBANS GREEN REVIVAL

20,000 mangroves thrive in Sundarbans project

SUNDARBANS: A large-scale mangrove plantation effort under the Green India Challenge has shown strong results in the Sundarbans, where 20,000 geo-tagged saplings planted earlier this year have now grown into healthy young mangroves.

The saplings were planted on February 17, 2026, as a tribute to Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. A recent site visit by the organisers confirmed that many of the mangroves have grown up to three feet tall, showing strong survival and growth rates. Officials said the comparison between initial plantation photographs and current field conditions highlights the success of scientific planting methods, regular monitoring, and active community participation in maintaining the saplings.

Each tree was geo-tagged to allow tracking of its survival and growth, ensuring transparency and accountability in the plantation drive.

The Sundarbans, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the world's largest mangrove ecosystem and plays a crucial role in protecting coastal areas from cyclones, floods, sea-level rise and erosion.

Organisers said the initiative demonstrates how community-led environmental action can contribute to climate resilience while also supporting biodiversity and local livelihoods.

The Green India Challenge team said the plantation drive is part of a larger environmental movement that encourages citizens, students and organisations to take part in large-scale tree plantation efforts across the country. Since its launch in 2018, the initiative has reportedly led to the planting of millions of trees across India, promoting awareness about environmental protection and climate action.

VISVESVARAYA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
"Jnana Sangama", Belagavi - 590 018, Karnataka State.
No.: V.T.U./BGM/S.A.P./CW1/T-750/2026-27/1096 Date: 10-06-2026
E-TENDER NOTIFICATION
The Registrar, V.T.U., Belagavi, invites E-tenders **(Two Cover Systems)** for the following works through E-procurement tendering mode. **Name of the Tender : Tender for Printing and Supply of Grade Cards to VTU Examination Section, Belagavi. Estimated Amount : Rs. 54,00,000/-, EMD Amount : Rs. 1,08,000/-, Last Date for Receipt of Tender : 24-06-2026 upto 2.30 p.m. Date of Opening of Tender : 25-06-2026 at 4.00 p.m.** The details regarding participation in the e-Tendring can be accessed by logging to our **VTU Website : www.vtu.ac.in** and E-procurement Portal **Website : www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**
Sd/- Registrar.
V.T.U., Belagavi,
DIPR/Belagavi/407/Manipal/2026-27

Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD Ramanagara Special Division
Ramanagara, Bengaluru South Dist.
No. EE/PWD/RMN Spl.Div./TND-03/2026-27 Date : 08.06.2026
SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
Tenders are invited in two cover system from the eligible contractors for **08 works** from **Rs. 100.00 Lakhs to Rs.800.00 Lakhs** through e-procurement portal as per the Standard bid documents. The eligible contractors can participate in this tender through e-procurement portal http://Kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Documents may be downloaded from **11.06.2026 to 29.06.2026.** Last date for submission of tender **29.06.2026 upto 16:00 hours.** Date of Pre-bid meeting: **22.06.2026 at 11:30 Hours.** Date of opening of Technical bid **30.06.2026 (If possible) at 16:30 hours.** Tender Processing Fees, EMD as per E-Procurement. For more information contact the undersigned during Office Hours.
Sd/- **Executive Engineer**
PWD Special Division, Ramanagara
Bengaluru South Dist.
DIPR/BSD/97/SA/2025-26

Government of Karnataka
The Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Hassan Division, Hassan.
No. EE/PWD/HSN/JE-2/2026-27/ DATED: 08.06.2026.
TENDER NOTIFICATION NO: 13/2026-27, Dated:08.06.2026
Tender is invited by the Public Works Department on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000, Standard Tender Document KW-4 from the eligible registered Contractors of Karnataka PWD. Tenders invited through E-Procurement for 01 Work in Hassan division. The amount put to tender is Rs.201.65 lakhs. Last date of Receipt of tender is 23.06.2026 till 4.00 P.M. For more details visit https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in or contact this office through Phone No. 08172-268437 or in person during office hours.
Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD,
Hassan Division, Hassan.
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/210/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27

Government of Karnataka
Karnataka Public Works, Department. SIRASI Division(U.K), Karnataka Telephone: 08384- 223164 Fax: 08384- 224100.
No. PWD/SR./Dn/AE/IFT/ 5054KRDCL/2026-27/781 Date: 05.06.2026
INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT) KW-4
e-TENDER NOTIFICATION
1. The Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Sirasi invites tenders from eligible tenderers, for the construction of works detailed in the below. The tenderers may submit tenders for any or all of the works given in the Table. **The price tender which will be opened only if the Tenderer is found to be qualified to execute the tendered works. The Tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderers to qualify for award of the contract. (26.03.2021)** 2. Tender documents may be downloaded from Government of Karnataka e-Procurement website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/eportal/index.seam** under login for Contractors: (3) Tenders must be accompanied by EMD Declaration form Proforma attached (4) Tenders must be electronically submitted (on-line through internet) with in the date and time published in e-procurement portal. The technical bid will be opened after prescribed time and date in the eprocurement portal, in the presence of the Tenderers who wish to attend at the Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Department, SIRSI Division. (5) Other details can be seen in the tender documents.
(Total: 1 Work)
(1) Last date and time for Tender Queries/Clarifications : **22-06-2026 up to 16.00.00** (2) Last Date and Time for receipt of tenders : **23-06-2026 up to 16.00.00** (3) Date and Time for opening of Technical Bid : **24-06-2026 @ 16.30.00** (4) Date and Time for opening of Financial Bid **: 25-06-2026 @ 16.00.00**
DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/200/26-27 dt. 09.06.2026
Sd/- Executive Engineer
Public Work Department Division
Sirsi (Uttara Kannada)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ನೀರಾವರಿ ನಿಗಮ ನಿಯಮಿತ
(ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಒಂದು ಉದ್ಯಮ)
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್ ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಕನೀನಿ, ವಾರಾಹಿ ಯೋಜನಾ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಸಿದ್ಧಾಪುರ–576229. ಉಡುಪಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ. e mail: eevpzone@gmail.com
ದರಪಟ್ಟಿ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ
ಉತ್ತರಕನ್ನಡ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಭಟ್ಕಳ–ಹೊನ್ನಾವರ ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಮುಳ್ಳೂಡ್ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಹತ್ತಿರ ಶರಾವತಿ ನದಿಗೆ ಅಡ್ಡಲಾಗಿ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಲು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿರುವ "ಬ್ರಿಡ್ಜ್ ಕಂ ಬ್ಯಾರೇಜ್"(ಉಪ್ಪು ನೀರು ತಡೆಗೋಡೆ) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಅಂದಾಜು ಪಟ್ಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಶೀಟ್ ಪೈಲ್‌ಗಳ ದರಗಳನ್ನು ಅಳವಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಸಲುವಾಗಿ ದರಪಟ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕದಿಂದ 7 ದಿನಗಳೊಳಗೆ ಮುಚ್ಚಿದ ಲಕೋಟೆಯ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಗೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಪಟ್ಟ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆಯನ್ನು ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಲು ಕೋರಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08259–284240ಯನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.
ವಾಸಾಇ/ಸನೀಉ/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/159/26–27 ದಿ: 10–06–26
ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ಕನೀನಿ, ವಾರಾಹಿ ಯೋಜನಾ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಸಿದ್ಧಾಪುರ, ಉಡುಪಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಹಾವೇರಿ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಹಾವೇರಿ.
ಬಿ.ಎ.ಎಮ್.ಎಸ್ ಕಾಲೇಜ್ ಎದುರಿಗೆ, ರಿ.ಸ.ನಂ:85ಬ, ಹಂಚಿನಾಳ ಲೇಔಟ್, ಹಾವೇರಿ–581110
Email : huda.haveri@gmail.com ದೂ.ಸಂ: 08375–297388
ನಂಃಹಾನಪ್ರಾ/ಕೆರೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ/2026–27/136 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 10/06/2026
TENDER NOTIFICATION
Haveri Urban Development Authority has invited for the following indent numbered work for the development of Akkamahadevi Lake in Haveri Tahar under Lake Development Charge under the provisions of Two Covers System KW-4 through KPPP.
Indent Number : HAVUDA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT 5/Call-3, Package Amount Rs. **150.00** Lakhs, EMD amount Rs. **2.00** Lakhs
(1) Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tenders : **16/06/2026**,Time 4-00 PM (2) Date and Time for Opening of Technical Bid : **18/06/2026**,Time 10-30 AM (3) Date and Time for Opening of Financial Bid : **19/06/2026**, Time 11.00 AM
Note : (1) The undersigned reserves the right to postpone the tender process/cancel the tender completely/reject the tender without assigning any reason. (2) Any changes in the said tenders will not be published in the newspapers, instead the changes will be published only on the KPPP portal.
Interested tenderers can download the tender documents and further information from the Karnataka Government e-Procurement Portal website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.
Sd/- **Sd/-**
(Sannafakiragowda N. Gajigowdar) **(Pujara VeeraMallappa)**
Chairman, **Commissioner,**
Urban Development Authority, Haveri **Urban Development Authority, Haveri**
DIPR/Haveri/147/KSMCA/2026-27

QUICK READ

Military chopper crash kills all onboard in Kashmir

MUZAFFARABAD

All personnel aboard a Pakistan Army Mi-17 helicopter were killed when it crashed near Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-administered Kashmir during takeoff, the military said. Officials reported a technical fault caused the aircraft to go down and catch fire. No survivors were found. Rescue teams reached the crash site quickly, while authorities launched a board of inquiry to determine the exact cause of the accident. The helicopter belonged to the army aviation unit. The crash has raised concerns as investigations continue. Eyewitnesses reported seeing flames after impact.

2 crew missing after tanker strike near Oman

LONDON

Two crew members are missing and one was injured after a suspected missile strike on a tanker off the coast of Oman, maritime officials said. The ship reported an engine room fire about 20 nautical miles from Sohar. Security group Ambrey said the incident may be linked to US operations targeting vessels suspected of violating a blockade on Iran. The tanker, identified as Settebello, sent a distress call and was later assisted by Omani authorities. The U.S. Central Command has not commented yet. Investigations are ongoing while search efforts continue for the missing crew members at sea.

Iran war makes nuclear disarmament harder: Lee

South Korea's President Lee warns US-Iran tensions strengthen North Korea's nuclear stance while stressing diplomacy and security balance

SEOUL

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung has said that the ongoing US-Iran conflict has made it even less likely for North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons programme, highlighting rising global security concerns.

In an interview, Lee said the war has strengthened Pyongyang's belief that nuclear weapons are necessary for its survival. He made the remarks during a conversation with The Economist on the first anniversary of his inauguration. At the same time,

Lee noted that US President Donald Trump's "unique personality" could still help bring North Korea back to dialogue.

He said diplomacy remains possible, even in a tense international environment.

The South Korean President also reiterated his country's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. He said it is neither "desirable nor realistic" for South Korea to develop its own nuclear weapons.

On national security, Lee stressed that South Korea must take greater responsibility for its own defence while continuing to work closely with allies. He also reflected on the country's recent political turmoil following former President Yoon Suk Yeol's martial law declaration in 2024, saying South Korea now has an opportunity to move beyond instability and build a stronger future.

Lee suggested introducing a basic income system funded by excess corporate profits, especially from major semiconductor companies benefiting from the global AI boom. He also acknowledged legal uncertainties he may face after leaving office, saying there is a "high possibility" of impeachment or legal action depending on ongoing trials related to his earlier political roles. Meanwhile, reports said US military strikes in the region have further increased tensions with Iran, raising fears of broader escalation.

Over 1,200 animals culled in Mongolia

ULAN BATOR

Mongolia culls over 1,200 livestock after foot-and-mouth disease outbreaks, raising concerns over animal health, rural livelihoods, and wider economic impact.

Mongolia has culled more than 1,200 livestock animals after outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) were confirmed in the country's western provinces of Bayan-Ulgii and Khovd, as per reports.

According to the General Authority for Veterinary Services, a total of 1,230 animals were destroyed after being found infected with the SAT-1 strain of the virus. Officials said this marks the first time this particular and highly dangerous strain has been detected in Mongolia.

Foot-and-mouth disease is a highly contagious viral infection that affects animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs. It spreads quickly through direct contact, contaminated equipment, vehicles, people, and even wildlife. The outbreaks were first confirmed in late May, prompting immediate containment measures.

Authorities in the affected provinces have declared a heightened state of preparedness, which will remain in place indefinitely to prevent further spread. Officials also reported that another strain of the virus, known as the O serotype, has been detected in six other provinces across the country. This strain is responsible for most global outbreaks of the disease.

Livestock farming plays a major role in Mongolia's economy, with millions of animals forming the backbone of rural livelihoods and traditional nomadic culture.

The country had more than 58 million head of livestock at the end of 2025, highlighting the scale of the sector and the potential economic impact of the outbreak. Authorities continue to monitor the situation closely, as foot-and-mouth disease poses a serious threat to animal health, food production, and international trade in livestock products worldwide.

India emphasizes diplomacy and dialogue at ASEAN Regional Forum meeting, urging stronger cooperation for regional peace and stability

India backs dialogue at ASEAN Security Forum meet in Manila

MANILA

India has underlined the importance of dialogue and diplomacy in dealing with global security challenges during the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Senior Officials' Meeting held in Manila, Philippines, according to the Ministry of External Affairs.

India's delegation was led by Secretary (East) Rudrendra Tandon, who stressed the need for strengthening the ARF mechanism as a key platform for peaceful resolution of disputes.

Officials said discussions at the meeting focused on the current regional and international security situation, with participating countries calling for collective efforts to maintain a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region. India reiterated that dialogue and confidence-building measures remain essential tools for addressing complex geopolitical issues and avoiding conflict.

The ARF, established in 1993, is a major regional security forum that brings together ASEAN countries and their dialogue partners to promote peace, stability, and cooperation. It works through a structured process that includes confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy, and conflict management approaches.

The forum currently includes 27 members, among them all 11 ASEAN nations along with key global partners such as India, China, the United States, Japan, Russia, and the European Union, as well as several other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. India's participation reflects its continued commitment to regional stability and multilateral engagement in the Indo-Pacific.

They said the meeting also reaffirmed the importance of maintaining open communication channels among countries to reduce tensions and build trust in an increasingly complex global environment.

US pushes domestic rare earth production

WASHINGTON

US lawmakers have introduced a new bipartisan bill aimed at reducing America's dependence on China for permanent magnets, a key material used in electric vehicles, defence systems, and advanced technology.

The proposed legislation, called the Magnets Value Chain Support Act of 2026, was presented by Representative John Moolenaar and Representative Ro Khanna. Both lawmakers said the United States must rebuild its domestic supply chain to strengthen economic security and national defence.

Supporters of the bill said China currently controls more than 90% of the global supply chain for rare earth magnets, giving it significant influence over critical industries worldwide.

They warned that past export restrictions by China on key rare earth materials have already disrupted global supply chains and exposed vulnerabilities in US manufacturing. The bill aims to encourage domestic production by offering tax credits at different stages of magnet manufacturing, from raw material processing to advanced production. It also includes incentives for US companies that use locally produced magnets in their products.

They said the plan is designed to strengthen supply chain security and reduce reliance on foreign suppliers for materials used in electric vehicles, wind turbines, robotics, drones, and military equipment.

US Court rejects $100,000 H-1B Visa fee

WASHINGTON

A federal court in the United States has struck down a controversial $100,000 fee imposed on new H-1B visa petitions, marking a major legal win for state governments, employers and institutions that rely on skilled foreign workers.

The ruling, issued by a US District Court in Massachusetts, cancelled the fee introduced by the Trump administration for new H-1B applications filed after September 2025. It said the policy lacked proper legal backing, following a challenge from a coalition of US states.

State attorneys general welcomed the decision, saying the fee would have severely increased costs for universities, hospitals, research centres and government agencies that depend on specialised global talent.

Officials from Washington State said the ruling would help protect access to skilled professionals in fields such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and healthcare. They warned that the fee would have made it harder for public institutions to fill critical jobs.

California Attorney General Rob Bonta, who led the legal challenge, said the court had clearly rejected what he called an unlawful and excessive charge. He said the decision ensures the US remains open to global talent and supports essential services across sectors. Connecticut officials also criticised the fee, saying it placed an unfair burden on employers and risked worsening labour shortages in key professions such as teaching, medicine and research.

The states argued that employers had previously paid lower visa-related charges, and that the proposed fee would have created a major barrier to hiring skilled foreign workers.

US Democrats warn of Ebola preparedness gaps

WASHINGTON

A group of Democratic senators has raised concerns over the United States' ability to handle major infectious disease outbreaks, warning that the country may be unprepared to respond effectively to threats such as Ebola amid staffing cuts and leadership gaps in public health agencies.

In a letter addressed to Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the lawmakers said recent administrative decisions have weakened the nation's public health system. The letter was led by Senators Patty Murray and Tim Kaine and signed by several other Democratic senators.

The group claimed that large-scale job cuts and vacancies across key agencies have reduced the government's ability to detect and respond to disease outbreaks.

They said thousands of positions have been eliminated across institutions such as the CDC, FDA and National Institutes of Health. According to the senators, only a small number of senior leadership posts at the Department of Health and Human Services are currently filled, leaving major agencies without permanent heads during a period of global health concern.

The lawmakers said the situation is especially worrying as the United States prepares to host international visitors for major global events, including the FIFA World Cup, which could increase public health risks.

They also warned that ongoing Ebola and hantavirus outbreaks require strong coordination, clear communication, and fully staffed health institutions to ensure an effective response.

The letter criticised funding cuts to vaccine development programmes and raised concerns that reduced investment in medical research could weaken future pandemic preparedness. The senators have asked the health department to provide detailed responses by June 23, including steps to restore staffing, improve outbreak response, and strengthen disease surveillance systems across the country.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MOHAMMED AYUB AJAZ AHMED MERCHANT**, S/o. Ajaz Ahmed Merchant, Resident of R C Elite Residency, GF 001, No.65 Hutchins Road, 2nd Cross, Cooke Town, St. Thomas Town Post, Bengaluru-560084, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED AYUB MERCHANT**, vide affidavit dated: 09.06.2026 before notary CHANDRASHEKAR. M., Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MOHAMMED AASIM AJAZ AHMED MERCHANT**, S/o. Ajaz Ahmed Merchant, Resident of R C Elite Residency, GF 001, No.65 Hutchins Road, 2nd Cross, Cooke Town, St. Thomas Town Post, Bengaluru-560084, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED AASIM MERCHANT**, vide affidavit dated: 09.06.2026 before notary CHANDRASHEKAR. M., Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MAHAMAD KHAISER HAMEED** , S/o, Mohamed Yousuf, Resident of Farha Nagara Channapatna Ramanagar Dist 562160, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED KHAISER HAMEED** , vide affidavit dated: 10.06.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MUJEER KHAN SALEEM KHAN,** residing at Flat No. 6, No. 43, Shivaji Enclave, Nethaji Road, Pulikeshi Nagar, Frazer Town Post, Bengaluru-560005, have changed my name to **MUJEER KHAN** , vide affidavit dated: 10.06.2026 before notary N.NAGAPPA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **GAURAV KOTHARI** , S/o, Prakash Manikchand Kothari, Resident of No,706, 42nd Cross 3rd Block Near Old Police Station Rajajinagar Bengaluru District, 560010, have changed my name to **GAURAV KOTHARI PRAKASH** , vide affidavit dated: 10.06.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as **VEERABHADRAPPA K N** S/O NAGARAJU KAKOLU, R/o- No 249 Kakolu Village And Post Bangalore North Hesaragatta Hobli Bangalore- 560089, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as **BABU KAKOLU**.

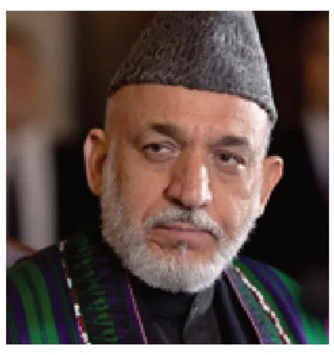
KARZAI CONDEMNS PAK OVER AFGHAN AIRSTRIKES

KABUL

Former Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai strongly criticised Pakistan over reported airstrikes in eastern Afghanistan that allegedly killed civilians, including women and children, in Kunar, Khost and Paktika provinces.

Karzai said Pakistan must accept responsibility for its actions and end what he described as a policy of "war and destruction" in the region. He urged Islamabad to choose peaceful and neighbourly relations instead of continued conflict.

His remarks came after Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said that Pakistani airstrikes had killed at least 13 civilians, most of them children, in recent attacks. He said the strikes targeted civilian homes and caused significant loss of life and injuries. Karzai expressed condolences to the affected families and said Pakistan's policies were harming regional stability and



its own long-term interests. According to reports, he said continued aggression would not help achieve any political or security goals and called for a shift towards peaceful diplomacy.

The Taliban administration also condemned the strikes, claiming that 11 children, one woman, and one elderly man were killed, while several others were injured. They said the attacks took place overnight and targeted residential areas.

Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have increased in recent months, with both sides accusing each other of cross-border attacks and actions that threaten regional peace.

Officials in Afghanistan said earlier incidents have also caused damage to schools, clinics, and religious sites, further worsening humanitarian concerns in border regions. Diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions have so far made little progress as violence and accusations continue between the two neighbours.

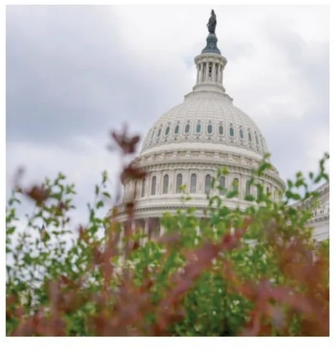
BORDER FUNDING PUSH

US House approves $70 billion border bill

WASHINGTON

The US House of Representatives has narrowly passed a nearly $70 billion immigration enforcement package aimed at strengthening border security and expanding the operations of key federal agencies, marking a major win for President Donald Trump's administration.

The bill, called the Secure America Act, was approved by a 214–212 vote, largely along party lines, and now moves to the President for final approval. The funding is



set to support US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) over the next three years.

Officials said the legislation comes after months of political deadlock, with Republicans and Democrats disagreeing over how immigration enforcement should be funded and regulated. Republicans pushed the bill through using a budget process that allowed them to avoid extended opposition.

Supporters of the bill said the funding will help strengthen border operations, fight drug trafficking, and tackle human smuggling networks. They argued that increased resources are needed to improve national security and protect citizens.

Republican leaders described the measure as essential for supporting law enforcement agencies working at the border, saying it will improve their ability to handle illegal immigration and criminal networks.

The White House and Trump allies welcomed the decision, calling it a key step in advancing the administration's immigration agenda. Officials said the funding will allow enforcement agencies to expand their operations significantly. However, Democrats and immigrant rights groups strongly opposed the bill, saying it increases enforcement power without adequate oversight or reforms. They warned that it could lead to stricter deportation actions and reduced protections for migrants.

The vote highlights deep political divisions in the United States over immigration policy, with Republicans prioritising enforcement and Democrats calling for balanced reforms and accountability measures.

Raul Jimenez secures Wolves return ahead of WC campaign

Mexico striker commits to club future just before opening World Cup match

WOLVERHAMPTON

Mexico striker Raul Jimenez has resolved his club future ahead of the FIFA World Cup by signing for a second spell with English side Wolverhampton Wanderers, just days before his national team begins its campaign against South Africa.

Jimenez has joined Wolves on an initial two-year deal after leaving Fulham, where his contract was set to expire at the end of June. The move comes as the club prepares for life in the EFL Championship following relegation from the Premier League last season.

The 34-year-old forward previously enjoyed a successful stint at Wolves between 2018 and 2023, after arriving from Benfica. During his first spell at the club, Jimenez scored 57 goals in 166 appearances and established himself as a key figure in the team's attacking setup.

Wolves executive chairman Nathan Shi welcomed the striker's return, describing it as a significant moment for the club and its supporters. "Being able to bring Raul back to Wolves is a truly special moment for everyone connected with this football club," he said.

Jimenez's return provides Wolves with an experienced attacking option as they aim to rebuild and push for promotion back to the Premier League. His familiarity with the club and its system is expected to be an advantage as he rejoins a squad undergoing transition.

For Mexico, Jimenez's club clarity comes at a crucial time, with the national team set to open their World Cup campaign against South Africa on Thursday. The striker remains one of Mexico's most important attacking players and will be expected to play a central role in their tournament ambitions.

Jimenez has been in encouraging form in recent international appearances, contributing goals and leadership in the final build-up to the global event. His experience at major tournaments is seen as vital for Mexico as they look to progress deep into the competition.

With his club future settled and international focus ahead, Jimenez enters the World Cup with stability and confidence, aiming to make an impact on both fronts in the months ahead.

Celebrations clash with social tensions in Mexico ahead of WC

Mexico City mixes festive World Cup build-up with rising protests and security concerns

MEXICO CITY

As Mexico prepares to host the opening ceremonies of the FIFA World Cup, celebrations in the capital have been increasingly overshadowed by rising social tensions, protests and concerns over security across several host cities.

The tournament, jointly hosted by Mexico, the United States and Canada, is set to begin with an inauguration ceremony and opening match on Thursday, marking the start of a month-long global sporting spectacle. However, beneath the festive atmosphere in Mexico City, authorities are grappling with criticism over governance, public spending and safety.

President Claudia Sheinbaum faces mounting political pressure as the country navigates diplomatic strains with the United States ahead of key trade talks in July, along with domestic criticism over alleged neglect of pressing social issues. Analysts say the World Cup has placed her administration under intense scrutiny at a sensitive time.

Authorities have ramped up security across the three host cities — Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey — following violent incidents earlier this year in Guadalajara that temporarily disrupted preparations. More than 100,000 personnel, including soldiers, National Guard members and police officers, have been deployed to maintain order during the tournament.

Despite these measures, protests have continued in Mexico City, where teacher unions and civil groups have staged demonstrations over labour conditions and public spending priorities. Protesters have also highlighted Mexico's ongoing humanitarian crisis, including the more than 130,000 missing persons reported nationwide.

Critics argue that resources being allocated for World Cup preparations could have been directed toward education, infrastructure and social welfare programmes. Some public spaces have seen the removal of banners and installations linked to the tournament amid tensions between authorities and demonstrators.

However, government officials maintain that the event will provide a major economic boost, with estimates suggesting the tournament could generate around $3 billion for the hospitality and tourism sectors.

Amid the tension, excitement remains visible across the country. Streets in Mexico City are decorated with FIFA branding, national colours and football-themed installations, while fans from across the world have begun arriving in large numbers.

The opening match between Mexico and South Africa is expected to draw global attention, alongside a star-studded inauguration ceremony featuring international performers.

While officials hope the tournament will showcase Mexico's organisational strength on the world stage, observers note that balancing celebration with social realities remains the biggest challenge in the days ahead.

Residents of Marktweg transform neighbourhood into vibrant celebration of national pride

Street in The Hague turns orange as Dutch fans embrace World Cup fever

THE HAGUE

As the Netherlands prepares for its opening match at the FIFA World Cup, football fever has taken over parts of the country, with one street in The Hague standing out as a dazzling display of national pride drenched entirely in orange.

On Marktweg Street, residents have transformed their neighbourhood into a sea of colour, covering homes, trees, lamp posts and fences with orange decorations in support of the Dutch national team. From fluttering flags to painted façades, the street has become a symbol of collective enthusiasm ahead of the global tournament.

The vibrant transformation is not limited to decorations alone. Lions, a national symbol of the Netherlands, feature prominently throughout the street, often depicted wearing the iconic orange jersey of the national team, affectionately known as "Oranje". The result

is a striking visual tribute that reflects the deep connection between football and Dutch identity.

At one intersection, a small caravan painted in red, white and blue stands out amid the overwhelming orange theme. Marked as the "Hague Orange Campsite", it has become a meeting point for fans and residents who have contributed to the weeks-long effort of decorating the area.

Local organiser Danny van Dijk said the initiative has been met with widespread appreciation from the community. "So far, we haven't encountered anyone who said they don't like it or complain about it. Up to now, we've only heard positive things," he said, highlighting the spirit of unity driving the project.

The Netherlands will begin its World Cup campaign against Japan in Dallas before facing Sweden in Houston and Tunisia in Kansas City during the group stage. The tournament has sparked excitement across the country, with fans preparing to follow their team's journey across the United States.

Members of the Dutch royal family, including the king, queen and crown princess, are expected to attend the match against Sweden, further underlining the national significance of the event.

Despite never having won the World Cup, the Netherlands has reached the final three times, in 1974, 1978 and 2010, cementing its reputation as one of football's most consistent contenders.

For visitors like amateur photographer Rob van Rosmalen, the transformation of Marktweg is a testament to community spirit. "The street is beautifully decorated. All that orange. That must have been a huge task," he said, praising the cooperation among neighbours that has turned the area into a festive landmark.

Benfica says Mourinho agrees Real Madrid return after Arbeloa exit

MADRID

Benfica have announced that manager José Mourinho has agreed to return to Real Madrid, following the Spanish club's decision to part ways with head coach Álvaro Arbeloa after a turbulent season without major silverware.

In a statement to shareholders, Benfica confirmed that Real Madrid have agreed to pay €15 million ($17.3 million) as compensation for Mourinho, with the Portuguese coach also giving his consent to the move. The club thanked their outgoing manager, stating simply: "Thank you, José Mourinho."

Real Madrid, however, have not yet made an official announcement regarding Mourinho's appointment, despite widespread expectation that the deal has been finalised. The move comes shortly after Florentino Pérez secured re-election as club president, with reports suggesting Mourinho's return was part of his campaign promises. Arbeloa's departure had been anticipated after a difficult spell in charge. He took over in January following the exit of Xabi Alonso but was unable to reverse Madrid's fortunes as the team endured a second consecutive season without a major trophy. In its statement, the club expressed gratitude for Arbeloa's contribution, praising his "loyalty, commitment, and professionalism."

Mourinho is set for a second stint at the Santiago Bernabéu, having previously managed Real Madrid between 2010 and 2013. During that period, he guided the club to a La Liga title and a Copa del Rey triumph, although his tenure was marked by intense rivalry with Pep Guardiola's Barcelona and frequent controversies both on and off the pitch.

His return is expected to divide opinion, as his previous spell was defined by both success and tension within the dressing room. Nevertheless, he retains strong backing among sections of the fanbase and former players, including Arbeloa, who had publicly supported his comeback.

Following Arbeloa's exit, Madrid are reported to have already lined up Marco Silva, formerly of Fulham, as Benfica's replacement for Mourinho on a two-year deal with an option for an extension.

White House WC chief defends visa ban for Somali referee, Iranian staff

WASHINGTON

The head of the White House Task Force for the FIFA World Cup has defended the United States' decision to deny visas to a Somali referee and several members of Iran's support staff, stating that security concerns were the primary reason for the move.

Andrew Giuliani, executive director of the task force, said during an event in Washington that while all participating teams had been able to enter the United States, certain officials were barred from entry after security vetting.

"To this point we've had 35 teams that have come into the United States," Giuliani said. "No players, no coaches have been denied. There have been some officials that have been denied, and for good reason."

A US State Department official later told AFP that the Somali referee was deemed ineligible for admission due to alleged associations with individuals linked to suspected terrorist organisations. The official added that such determinations were part of standard security screening procedures.

The referee in question, Omar Artan, who was named men's referee of the year by the Confederation of African Football in 2025, was expected to become the first Somali official to oversee matches at a FIFA World Cup. Reports indicate he was turned away upon arrival at Miami airport.

Somalia is among several countries affected by travel restrictions introduced under the current US administration's broader immigration and security policies.

The Iranian football federation also confirmed that its supporter ticket allocations had been revoked and that certain members of its team staff were denied visas. Iran are scheduled to play their group-stage matches in the United States but have already shifted training arrangements to Mexico amid broader geopolitical tensions.

FIFA WC 2026 set to unfold under shadow of global tensions

NEW DELHI

As North America prepares to host the expanded FIFA World Cup 2026, the "beautiful game" is set to unfold against a backdrop of geopolitical tensions, security concerns and rising debate over the future direction of football's biggest spectacle.

The tournament, co-hosted by the United States, Mexico and Canada, will feature 48 teams for the first time in history, marking a significant expansion from previous editions. It begins on June 11, with Mexico facing South Africa in the opening match, launching a month-long festival of football comprising 104 games across multiple cities.

Nearly four years after Argentina lifted the trophy in Qatar, defending champions and global superstars will once again take centre stage. Lionel Messi's Argentina will aim to defend their crown, while traditional heavyweights such as France, Brazil, England, Belgium, Portugal and the Netherlands enter the tournament among the favourites.

However, this edition is also expected to be a farewell stage for several iconic figures, with speculation that Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo and Manuel Neuer could be making their final World Cup appearances.

The expanded format, introduced under FIFA president Gianni Infantino's long-term vision, has significantly increased the number of matches and participating nations. The group stage alone now features 72 matches, raising questions about player fatigue and the quality of contests as the competition progresses.

New entrants such as Curaçao and Cape Verde add fresh narratives, while Asia and the Arab world have achieved record representation. Iraq's return to the tournament after decades adds emotional weight, while Italy's continued absence remains one of the competition's most notable disappointments.

The build-up to the tournament has not been without controversy. Political tensions in West Asia, concerns over violence in parts of Mexico, and disputes surrounding ticket pricing and broadcasting rights have all contributed to a complicated prelude.

Bengaluru's Srishti Kiran becomes world No. 1 in Under-13 tennis rankings

BENGALURU

Thirteen-year-old Srishti Kiran from Bengaluru has emerged as the world No. 1 in the Under-13 tennis rankings, marking a remarkable milestone in her early sporting journey and placing her among India's most exciting junior prospects.

At an age when most children are focused on school routines and extracurricular activities, Srishti has been making waves on the international junior circuit with a string of consistent performances. Her rise to the top of the global rankings comes after an impressive run on the ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors, where she recently secured five consecutive titles before finishing runner-up at the ITF J100 tournament in Guatemala.

Her strong form has also helped her climb to a career-best ITF junior ranking of No. 357, underlining her steady progress against higher-ranked and more experienced opponents. Despite competing in only eight ranking tournaments, Srishti managed to accumulate enough points to top the Under-13 global standings.

According to her support team, she missed two additional ranking events due to financial and logistical constraints, which makes her achievement even more notable, as the rankings consider a maximum of ten tournaments.

Speaking after reaching the milestone, Srishti expressed happiness while maintaining a grounded outlook on her development. "I'm really happy to become World No. 1 in my age group. It's something I wasn't thinking about at the start of the year, but all the hard work with my coaches, family and support team is paying off," she said.

Reflecting on her recent performances, she added that her winning streak had boosted her confidence significantly. "Winning five titles in a row and then reaching another final has given me a lot of confidence. At the same time, I know there is still a long way to go," she said.

QUICK READ

Strong May inflows boost equity mutual funds

MUMBAI

Equity mutual funds attracted net inflows of Rs 22,907.77 crore in May, according to AMFI, highlighting sustained investor confidence. The mutual fund industry's assets under management reached Rs 81.58 lakh crore, while folios increased to 27.65 crore. Flexi-cap funds led equity inflows with Rs 5,175.54 crore, followed by small-cap and mid-cap funds, which together with flexi-cap schemes accounted for over 63 percent of total equity investments. Large and mid-cap funds and multi-cap funds also received healthy inflows. Hybrid schemes garnered Rs 10,560.24 crore, driven by arbitrage and multi-asset allocation funds. Index funds and overseas fund of funds gained inflows, while Gold ETFs recorded outflows.

Flexi staffing sector records strong employment growth

NEW DELHI

India's general flexi staffing industry recorded 7.9 per cent net headcount growth in FY26, adding 1.18 lakh formal temporary and flexible workers according to the Indian Staffing Federation. The total formal flexi workforce reached 1.91 million, while IT staffing rebounded with 10.1 per cent year on year employment growth. Industry leaders said demand from global capability centres, retail, logistics and manufacturing supported hiring. Quarterly data showed cautious stabilisation in the final quarter, with flexi employment rising 0.9 per cent and IT staffing up 0.2 per cent. The report also highlighted youth led workforce formalisation, with many new employees joining organised payrolls.

DGTR protects industry under WTO trade rules

NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) plays a key role in protecting Indian industry from unfair trade practices while ensuring compliance with World Trade Organization rules, said top official Amitabh Kumar in New Delhi. He explained that DGTR conducts anti-dumping, anti-subsidy and safeguard investigations and recommends appropriate measures to the government. These actions aim to address dumped, subsidised or sudden import surges that harm domestic producers. Kumar stressed that trade remedies ensure fair competition rather than restricting imports.

India witnessed remarkable progress under PM Modi

CII praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 12-year tenure, citing economic growth, reforms, infrastructure expansion and global influence gains

NEW DELHI

India has achieved significant progress across economic, social and infrastructure sectors during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 12 years in office, according to the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The industry body said reforms, efficient governance and a focus on inclusive development have strengthened the country's resilience, competitiveness and global standing.

Congratulating Prime Minister Modi on completing 12 years of leadership, CII Director General Chandrajit Banerjee said India has emerged as one of the world's leading economies and a confident voice on the global stage during this period.

"I convey my heartfelt congratulations to PM Modi on the completion of 12 years of transformative leadership," Banerjee said, highlighting the government's efforts in driving economic growth and national development.

He noted that over the past decade, India has made substantial progress in areas such as inclusive economic development, infrastructure creation, innovation, entrepreneurship and social welfare. According to him, these initiatives have helped improve the quality of life for millions of citizens while creating a stronger foundation for long-term growth.

Banerjee said the government's emphasis on reforms, efficient administration and inclusive growth has enhanced India's economic resilience and competitiveness. These measures have also generated new opportunities for businesses, investors and entrepreneurs, contributing to higher confidence in the country's growth prospects.

The CII Director General further stated that Indian industry has benefited from an enabling business environment supported by sustained economic expansion, policy reforms and a strong push towards innovation and self-reliance. He added that the benefits of development have reached wider sections of society, promoting more balanced and inclusive growth.

Looking ahead, Banerjee reaffirmed industry's commitment to partnering with the government in achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. He said businesses would continue to support efforts aimed at sustainable development, innovation, job creation and economic resilience.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Modi became India's longest-serving Prime Minister, completing 4,399 days in office and surpassing the record previously held by former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Several Union ministers also hailed the milestone, describing it as a reflection of public trust in his leadership.

E85 fuel introduced, expansion plans under discussion: Min Hardeep

India has introduced E85 fuel for compatible flex-fuel vehicles and is consulting industry stakeholders on expanding ethanol-based fuels nationwide.

NEW DELHI

The government has introduced E85 fuel for compatible flex-fuel vehicles and is actively consulting the automobile industry on expanding the use of higher ethanol blends in the country, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Wednesday.

The minister highlighted India's rapid progress in ethanol blending and said the country has exceeded key targets ahead of schedule. He noted that ethanol blending in petrol has risen significantly from just 1.5 percent in 2014 to 10 percent by November 2022.

According to Puri, the government had originally targeted achieving 20 per cent ethanol blending by 2030. However, the milestone was reached much earlier, in 2024, reflecting the success of policies aimed at promoting cleaner and more sustainable fuel alternatives.

The minister said discussions are underway with stakeholders across the automobile sector, including the automobile industry body SIAM and other organisations, to explore future expansion of ethanol-based fuel usage. He clarified that E85 fuel has currently been introduced only for vehicles specifically designed and certified to operate on E85 fuel blends.

Highlighting the government's broader energy strategy, Puri said India is steadily moving toward greater energy self-reliance through increased domestic exploration and production, expanded biofuel adoption and growing renewable energy capacity. He pointed to the Samudra Manthan initiative announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, under which Rs 90,000 crore has been allocated for drilling new wells and boosting domestic energy output.

Addressing concerns over fuel prices, the minister said petrol prices in Delhi remain lower than levels recorded four years ago due to multiple excise duty reductions by the Central government.

He added that excise duties on petrol and diesel were reduced in November 2021, May 2022 and again recently, while several BJP-ruled states also lowered VAT on fuels.

On the reduction in subsidised LPG cylinder allocations under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, Puri said the decision was taken after reports of misuse, including diversion of subsidised cylinders for commercial purposes and resale by some beneficiaries.

India and the United States are poised to strengthen hydrocarbon cooperation, supporting energy security and ambitious bilateral trade growth

Hydrocarbon partnership may propel India-US trade expansion

NEW DELHI

Strengthening hydrocarbon cooperation between India and the United States could become a major driver in achieving the two countries' shared objective of expanding bilateral trade to $500 billion by 2030, according to a report released on Wednesday.

The report, prepared by the US-India Business Council (USIBC) and Grant Thornton Bharat, highlighted the growing importance of hydrocarbons, including liquefied natural gas (LNG), crude oil, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), ethane and propane, in enhancing trade, investment opportunities, energy security and supply chain resilience between the two nations.

According to the report, the India-US energy relationship is steadily evolving beyond a conventional buyer-seller framework into a broader strategic partnership encompassing trade, technology, infrastructure, investment and

long-term energy cooperation.

Rahul Sharma, Managing Director of USIBC India, said the transformation of energy ties reflects the wider progress of bilateral relations. He noted that both countries are increasingly moving from transactional engagement toward deeper strategic integration across key sectors. Sharma added that collaboration in energy, technology and investment can strengthen energy security, support economic growth and create new opportunities to boost bilateral trade.

The report recommended three priority actions to unlock the full potential of the partnership: increasing the scale and value of hydrocarbon trade, creating a more predictable and attractive investment environment, and diversifying supply chains to reinforce long-term energy security.

It also identified significant opportunities for American investments in India's upstream exploration and production sector, LNG infrastructure, city gas distribution networks, gas-based power generation and downstream petrochemical projects.

At the same time, Indian companies could expand their presence in the US energy sector through investments in LNG export facilities, shale resources, upstream oil and gas assets and petrochemical feedstock value chains.

The report further proposed establishing an India-US AI-Powered Energy Task Force to accelerate the adoption of advanced technologies, including AI-driven forecasting, predictive maintenance, exploration optimisation and digital twin solutions across the hydrocarbon industry.

Starlink says India approval talks remain actively ongoing

NEW DELHI

Starlink has rejected reports suggesting that the Indian government has frozen approvals for its satellite internet services, asserting that discussions with authorities remain active and constructive. The clarification comes after a media report claimed that regulatory approvals for the Elon Musk-led company had been put on hold due to concerns related to the use of Starlink terminals during the Iran conflict.

Lauren Dreyer, Vice President of Starlink Business Operations, said the company continues to engage positively with the Government of India and has received encouraging responses regarding its plans for the country. In a statement posted on social media platform X, Dreyer described reports of an approval freeze as misleading and based on unverified claims from anonymous sources. According to Dreyer, Starlink has worked closely with Indian authorities throughout the regulatory process and has complied with all applicable security.

Reliance teams with Meta for Gujarat AI data centre

NEW DELHI

Reliance Industries has partnered with Meta to develop a large-scale 168 MW AI-enabled data centre in Gujarat, marking a significant step in India's expanding artificial intelligence and digital infrastructure ecosystem.

The project is expected to support advanced computing workloads, including AI model training, cloud services and large-scale data processing requirements. According to industry sources, the facility will be designed to handle high-density computing operations, enabling faster and more efficient processing of complex AI applications.

The collaboration brings together Reliance's infrastructure capabilities and Meta's expertise in artificial intelligence and digital platforms. The data centre is expected to strengthen India's position as a growing hub for AI infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region, while also supporting domestic demand for cloud computing and digital services.

Officials familiar with the development said Gujarat was selected due to its strong power infrastructure, renewable energy potential and established industrial ecosystem. The 168 MW capacity places the facility among the larger AI-focused data centre projects currently under development in the country.

The project aligns with the broader trend of global technology companies and Indian conglomerates investing heavily in AI infrastructure. Rising demand for generative AI, machine learning and data-driven applications has significantly increased the need for high-performance data centres capable of handling large-scale computation.

Industry analysts note that such investments are expected to accelerate India's digital economy growth, improve data sovereignty capabilities and attract further foreign and domestic investment in cloud and AI ecosystems. The collaboration is also seen as a signal of increasing convergence between telecommunications, cloud computing and artificial intelligence sectors.

While financial details of the partnership have not been fully disclosed.

CNG momentum expected strong, Morbi PNG demand peaks

NEW DELHI

The outlook for compressed natural gas (CNG) demand in India is expected to remain strong through FY27, supported by expanding city gas infrastructure, rising vehicle adoption and stable pricing conditions, according to industry-linked reports. At the same time, industrial piped natural gas (PNG) demand in Morbi is projected to reach record levels as manufacturing activity in the ceramic hub continues to recover and expand.

Industry data indicates that CNG consumption has maintained steady growth in key urban and semi-urban markets, driven by increasing preference for cleaner and more cost-efficient fuel options in the transport sector. Analysts expect this momentum to continue as more cities expand their city gas distribution (CGD) networks and vehicle conversions to CNG remain attractive due to lower running costs compared to petrol and diesel.

In parallel, the Morbi industrial cluster in Gujarat is witnessing a sharp rebound in PNG demand, supported by the revival of ceramic production units. Reports suggest that gas consumption in the region has surged significantly as factories ramp up operations and shift toward cleaner fuel sources. Some estimates indicate a multiple-fold increase in demand compared to previous lows, with expectations of all-time high consumption levels in the near term.

City gas companies are responding with increased capital expenditure plans to expand pipeline networks and ensure uninterrupted supply. Infrastructure expansion in both CNG retail stations and industrial PNG connections is being accelerated to meet rising demand across sectors.

Energy analysts note that the combined growth in CNG and PNG reflects a broader structural shift in India's energy consumption pattern toward natural gas. Government policy support for cleaner fuels, along with industrial recovery and urban transport growth, is expected to keep demand resilient through FY27.

- CNG demand expected to remain strong
- PNG consumption in Morbi surging sharply
- City gas network expansion driving growth
- Cleaner fuel shift supports gas adoption
- Industrial recovery boosting natural gas usage

MSMEs, startups trained on defence procurement ecosystem

NEW DELHI

A two-day workshop aimed at training micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and startups on defence procurement procedures, innovation frameworks and testing protocols will be held in the capital on June 11 and 12, according to an official statement from the Ministry of Defence.

The workshop will focus on key initiatives such as Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), the Technology Perspective Capability Roadmap (TPCR), procurement processes and certification systems, with the objective of improving industry participation in India's defence ecosystem.

It is being jointly organised by the Indigenisation Directorate under Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) and the Centre for Joint Warfare Studies (CENJOWS). The programme is designed to enhance awareness among industry stakeholders and encourage greater involvement of MSMEs and startups in defence manufacturing and innovation.

According to the ministry, the sessions will provide an interactive platform for participants to understand defence acquisition procedures.

DATA CENTER CHIP BOOM

TSMC posts strong may revenue driven by AI demand

TAIPEI

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) reported robust financial performance for May 2026, reflecting continued global demand for advanced semiconductor chips, particularly those used in artificial intelligence and high-performance computing applications.

The company said net revenue for May stood at approximately $13.25 billion, marking a 30.1 per cent increase compared to the same period last year. The figure also showed steady month-on-month growth, indicating sustained momentum in orders from major global technology customers.

TSMC's strong performance is largely attributed to rising demand for cutting-edge semiconductor nodes used in AI accelerators, data centers, cloud computing infrastructure and next-generation consumer electronics. Industry analysts say the ongoing global AI expansion has significantly boosted chip demand, benefiting leading foundries such as TSMC, which manufactures chips for companies including Nvidia, Apple, AMD and Broadcom.

For the first five months of 2026, the company's cumulative revenue has also risen by around 30 per cent year-on-year, suggesting that growth is not limited to short-term fluctuations but is part of a broader upward trend in semiconductor demand. The company continues to operate near high utilization levels at its advanced fabrication facilities.

TSMC has previously indicated that it expects strong revenue growth for the full year, supported by what it describes as a "multi-year AI demand cycle."

The firm is also investing heavily in expanding production capacity, including advanced manufacturing technologies and packaging solutions, to address supply constraints in the global chip market.

Despite global economic uncertainties and geopolitical tensions affecting the semiconductor industry, TSMC's latest results underline its continued leadership in the global foundry sector. Analysts note that the company's performance is widely viewed as a key indicator of the health of the global technology and AI hardware ecosystem.

With artificial intelligence adoption accelerating across industries, demand for high-end chips is expected to remain strong, positioning TSMC at the center of one of the most important technology cycles of the decade.

HARDIK PANDYA ruled out of Afghanistan ODIs

India all-rounder suffers fresh injury setback after recovering from back spasm

BENGALURU

India all-rounder Hardik Pandya has been ruled out of the upcoming three-match ODI series against Afghanistan after sustaining a quadriceps strain during a fitness assessment at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru.

Pandya had recently been undergoing rehabilitation for a back spasm injury that he suffered while representing the Mumbai Indians in the IPL 2026 season. He was at the Centre of Excellence to obtain fitness clearance for a return to international cricket and had reportedly been declared fit to play just hours before the fresh injury setback emerged.

According to sources, the quadriceps strain may have occurred while Pandya was bowling his full quota of 10 overs during the assessment process. The injury has now forced the star all-rounder out of contention for the ODI series against Afghanistan, which begins on June 13 in Dharamsala.

A BCCI source indicated that Pandya's recovery is expected to take around three weeks, effectively ruling him out of the entire series. "With three weeks for recovery, there is absolutely no chance of him playing the ODI series as his rehabilitation will not be complete," the source said.

The setback comes at a time when Pandya was preparing to make his comeback after missing several matches during the IPL season. Although he returned to action for Mumbai Indians' final league-stage match against Rajasthan Royals on May 24, concerns over his fitness have continued to persist.

Pandya's absence is a significant blow for India, given his role as a key all-rounder who contributes with both bat and ball. The team management will now have to look at alternative options to fill the void ahead of the ODI series.

The three-match ODI series against Afghanistan will be played in Dharamsala, Lucknow and Chennai on June 13, 17 and 20 respectively. India will be hoping that Pandya recovers fully in time for future international assignments later this year.

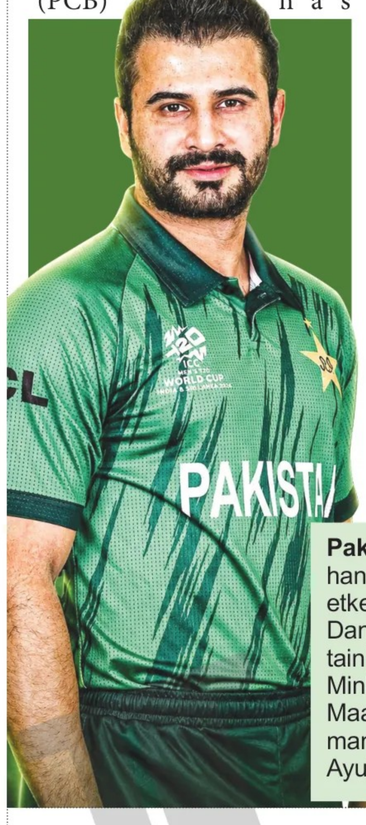
Pakistan unveil Asian Games 2026 squad; Sahibzada Farhan to lead side

LAHORE

Pakistan have announced a youthful 15-member squad for the Asian Games 2026 in Japan, with experienced batter Sahibzada Farhan appointed captain for the multi-sport event scheduled later this year.

The men's cricket competition at the Asian Games will begin on September 24 in Aichi-Nagoya, with the medal matches set to be played on October 3. The (PCB) has opted for a fresh-look squad, resting several senior international players while providing opportunities to promising youngsters.

Pakistan name youthful squad with several emerging talents for Japan tournament



Farhan, who has represented Pakistan in 46 T20 Internationals, will lead the national side for the first time in a major tournament. Abdul Samad has been named vice-captain and is expected to provide stability and experience in the middle order.

The squad selection underlines Pakistan's focus on strengthening its white-ball bench strength and preparing a pool of players for future international assignments. Four uncapped cricketers — Akif Javed, Ali Raza, Maaz Sadaqat and Saad Masood — have earned places in the squad and could make their international debuts during the tournament.

Young talents such as Saim Ayub and Arafat Minhas have also been included after impressive performances in domestic and franchise cricket. Their selection reflects the PCB's intention to reward consistent performers and expose them to high-level competition.

Notably absent from the squad are several of Pakistan's established stars, including white-ball captain Salman Ali Agha, former skipper Babar Azam, pace spearhead Shaheen Afridi and all-rounder Shadab Khan. The decision indicates a strategic move to test emerging players while managing the workload of senior cricketers.

Usman Khan has been named the squad's primary wicketkeeper, while spinner Abrar Ahmed is expected to lead the spin department. The pace attack will feature promising bowlers Ahmed Daniyal and Mohammad Salman Mirza alongside other young fast-bowling options.

Pakistan finished fourth in the previous edition of the Asian Games after winning one match and losing two. With a balanced mix of youth and experience, the team will be aiming for a stronger showing in Japan and will look to challenge for a medal while giving its next generation of cricketers valuable international exposure.

Pakistan squad: Sahibzada Farhan (captain), Usman Khan (wicketkeeper), Abrar Ahmed, Ahmed Daniyal, Abdul Samad (vice-captain), Akif Javed, Ali Raza, Arafat Minhas, Haider Ali, Hasan Nawaz, Maaz Sadaqat, Mohammad Salman Mirza, Saad Masood, Saim Ayub and Sufyan Moqim.

England football captain rekindles cricket passion with humorous social media post

Harry Kane jokes about joining ECB and RCB ahead of World Cup

LONDON

England football captain Harry Kane has once again displayed his love for cricket, jokingly offering his services to both the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and IPL champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) ahead of the FIFA World Cup.

The Bayern Munich striker, who has often spoken about his admiration for cricket and Indian batting great Virat Kohli, shared a light-hearted post on social media after participating in a cricket session during England's World Cup preparations.

As part of team-building activities ahead of the tournament, England's football squad spent time playing cricket on Tuesday. Kane, among the most enthusiastic participants, was seen batting and enjoying the session with teammates. Later, he posted pictures from the activity on X, accompanied by a caption that quickly caught the attention of fans.

"Always ready if needed, @englandcricket & @RCBTweets! ," Kane wrote, playfully suggesting that he could step in for England's cricket team or the reigning IPL champions if required.

The humorous remark sparked widespread reactions from supporters of both football and cricket. Many fans praised Kane's sporting spirit, while others joked about how the prolific striker might perform if he switched sports.

Kane's latest cricket-related post comes shortly after he congratulated RCB on their successful IPL 2026 campaign. The Bengaluru-based franchise retained its title by defeating Gujarat Titans by five wickets in the final, with Virat Kohli playing a key role in the triumph.

The England captain had earlier taken to social media to praise Kohli and RCB, writing, "What a player and what a knock @virat.kohli! Congrats @royalchallengers.bengaluru on making it back-to-back IPL titles."

Kane's admiration for Kohli has been evident over the years, with the football star frequently expressing respect for the Indian cricket icon's achievements and consistency.

Despite the playful cricket banter, Kane remains focused on leading England at the FIFA World Cup, which begins on June 11. The 32-year-old enters the tournament in outstanding form after a remarkable season with Bayern Munich, scoring 61 goals in 51 appearances across all competitions. Having also netted five goals in his last five matches for England, Kane will be expected to spearhead his nation's quest for World Cup glory while continuing to entertain fans with his passion for cricket.

Women's T20 World Cup countdown: Australia emerges strongest in Group A

MELBOURNE

As the Women's T20 World Cup approaches, Group A has already taken shape as one of the most competitive pools in the tournament, featuring powerhouses Australia, India and South Africa alongside Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Netherlands.

Cricket's inherent unpredictability ensures no outcome is guaranteed, yet Group A presents a harsh certainty — one of the three elite teams will fail to reach the semifinals. Australia, six-time champions, India, the reigning ODI world champions, and South Africa, runners-up in the last three global finals across formats, form a trio of heavyweights that could dominate any tournament individually but must now compete for survival against each other.

Despite undergoing a transitional phase following the retirements of Meg Lanning and Alyssa Healy, Australia continues to look the most balanced and formidable side. Healy's departure, after years of leadership and consistency both as captain and wicketkeeper, has left a gap in experience, but the team's depth has ensured stability at the top.

Georgia Voll, who has stepped into the opening role, has already justified her selection by rising to the top of the ICC T20I batting rankings. Around her, Australia boasts a formidable batting lineup featuring Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Phoebe Litchfield, Annabel Sutherland, Ashleigh Gardner and Grace Harris, many of whom also contribute as all-rounders.

Australia, India and South Africa headline a fierce Group A battle for semifinal spots

The Australian bowling attack remains equally versatile, with pacers Megan Schutt, Nicola Carey and Lucy Hamilton providing control and variation, while spinners Alana King, Georgia Wareham and skipper Sophie Molineux add further balance.

South Africa, meanwhile, will look to counter Australia's depth with individual brilliance, particularly through captain Laura Wolvaardt, who has been in sensational form. In a recent five-match series against India, she registered scores of 51, 54, 115, 18 and an unbeaten 92, leading her side to a 4-1 series win.

Her supporting cast includes Marizanne Kapp, Shabnim Ismail, Sune Luus, Tazmin Brits, Chloe Tryon and Ayabonga Khaka, giving South Africa a blend of experience, pace and all-round ability capable of challenging the best.

India, Pakistan and Bangladesh complete the group, with India expected to lead the Asian challenge. Pakistan's Fatima Sana and Bangladesh's Marufa Akter will be key figures for their sides, though both teams face an uphill task against the top contenders. The Netherlands round off the group, hoping to recreate their spirited performances from past ICC tournaments and deliver another memorable campaign on the global stage.

Jemimah Rodrigues recalls Tendulkar's advice to reset after ODI WC semifinal heroics

MUMBAI

India batter Jemimah Rodrigues has revealed that a timely call from cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar helped her reset mentally after her career-defining knock against Australia in the semifinal of the Women's ODI World Cup last year.

Rodrigues had played a sensational unbeaten innings of 127 in Navi Mumbai, guiding India to a famous victory over the tournament favourites and setting up their eventual maiden World Cup triumph. However, she admitted that the emotional high of the performance left her mentally overwhelmed ahead of the final.

Rodrigues said Tendulkar reached out indirectly through her coach Prashant Shetty to deliver a calming message. "Sachin sir called my coach Prashant Shetty. He asked him to tell me that he understood the past couple of days had been a lot for me, the big knock against Australia in the semifinal, the joy of beating them," she said.

"But he reminded me that the job was not over yet. We still had a final to win. He said, 'try to put that aside and start from zero'. That message really helped me reset my mind," Rodrigues added.

The 25-year-old said the advice helped her realise the importance of treating every match as a fresh start, regardless of past achievements. "I understood that what you did before does not win you the next game. You must treat every match as a new start. That advice from a legend gave me so much clarity before the final," she said.

India went on to defeat South Africa in the summit clash, with Shafali Verma delivering a match-winning all-round performance, scoring 87 runs and taking two wickets for 36 runs. Her efforts proved decisive as India lifted their maiden Women's ODI World Cup title.

Shafali also revealed a personal source of motivation before the final, saying a voice note from her father inspired her to give her best. "He said, 'Just work hard. Give your best on the field and it has to be in writing that Shafali Verma helped India win the World Cup,'" she said.

India, now reigning ODI world champions, are preparing for their upcoming T20 World Cup opener against arch-rivals Pakistan in Birmingham on Sunday, aiming to carry forward their winning momentum on the global stage.

ICC rates Lord's and Gaddafi Stadium pitches unsatisfactory after uneven contests

NEW DELHI

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has rated the pitches used for the first Test between England and New Zealand at Lord's and the third ODI between Pakistan and Australia at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium as "unsatisfactory", with both venues receiving one demerit point under the ICC Pitch and Outfield Monitoring Process. The decision follows reports from match referees highlighting that both surfaces provided playing conditions that were not in balance between bat and ball, significantly impacting the quality of competition in both matches.

At Lord's, the opening Test of the ICC World Test Championship 2025–27 cycle ended within four days despite interruptions due to rain on Day 3. The match saw a dramatic collapse of wickets across both sides, with England and New Zealand losing 16 and 17 wickets respectively on the first two days alone.

Match referee Andy Pycroft noted that the surface offered excessive seam movement and inconsistent bounce, which at times stayed unusually low. He said the conditions heavily favoured bowlers, making it extremely difficult for batters to settle or build innings.

"There was plenty of excessive seam movement throughout the Test, and the ball also kept extremely low on several occasions. The bounce was variable throughout as 16 wickets fell on the first day and 17 on the second. There was simply an over-balance in favour of ball against the bat caused by the pitch," Pycroft stated in his report.

Similarly, the Gaddafi Stadium pitch used for the third ODI between Pakistan and Australia on June 4 also came under scrutiny. Match referee Graeme La Brooy described the surface as slow and low, making stroke play challenging and unsuitable for the demands of one-day international cricket.

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